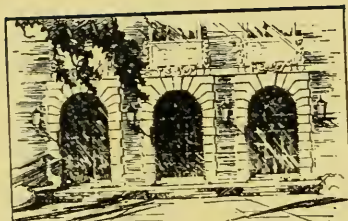


# HISTORY OF BELLEVILLE



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# A HISTORY OF BELLEVILLE

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# DEDICATION

*This work is affectionately  
dedicated to the Pioneers and  
Progressive Citizens of Our  
City of Belleville, Illinois.*



## PREFACE

This volume is largely the result of an inspiration for writing acquired as co-author of two magazine articles, one in our state professional magazine, "Illinois Education," May, 1937, and the other in a national professional magazine, "Social Studies," February, 1939. I have discovered that there is an appalling lack of information about local communities among the citizens as a whole. I believe community interest should always be encouraged. Surely we need not be reminded that the very foundation of democratic government is to be found in the communities and in the ability of the citizens to deal successfully with their local problems. To understand these problems is a complicated matter so we must plan intelligently. This I believe impossible without a knowledge of our past.

Our history is so much alive and growing that I find it hard to see how anyone can think of it as dead and dry. History always looks forward, not backward; it is dynamic, not static. Out of the world of yesterday, the world of today has grown; out of the world of today, will come the world of tomorrow. It is impossible to understand fully the present without a knowledge of the conditions which have brought it about; and it is equally impossible to make intelligent decisions for the future as we have only an uncomprehending view of the age in which we live.

We are not only citizens of the United States, or citizens of Illinois, but citizens of Belleville as well.. In the study of "Belleville" we have travelled from the larger unit to the smaller; from the continent, to the nation, to the state, and finally to the city itself. This was not an easy task and required steady application and untiring energy. My ambition was to give a well rounded picture of Belleville from the earliest day of our country to the present.

I would be ungracious indeed not to acknowledge the very great debt I owe to those who encouraged me to write, and to those who helped me when writing this book. Grateful acknowledgment is due to our Public Librarians, Bella Steurnagel and Maude Underwood, who were always ready to furnish me with the desired books and newspapers and give their valuable criticism and suggestions.

There were others who did not have ready access to the reference shelves but were most welcome for their suggestions and knowledge of local history as well as the proofreading they did. Among these were William U. Halbert, lawyer and historian; Robert L. Kern, editor and publisher of the News-Democrat; Frederick Merrills, lawyer and secretary of the high school board of education for the past thirty years; Meta Stenger and James Clark, instructors of English; H. A. Kanzler, instructor of Latin; L. N. Nick Perrin, Jr., lawyer and former city attorney; Hugo Ehret, president of the Oakland Foundry; Herman G. Wangelin, our past city postmaster; Oliver Muser and Richard Hampleman, grade school teachers; P. K. Johnson, Sr., lawyer and a former mayor of our city, and Herbert W. Dey, a former teacher and now a successful attorney in Litchfield, Illinois.

It gives me great pleasure to give public recognition to the following students who were ever willing to help me with typing and proofreading the manuscripts:

Norma Alves, Dorothy Ellis, Shirley Falk, Georgia Goepfert, Milton Goepfert, William Hassall, Eleanor Hess, Wayne Kissel, Joseph Krieg, Doris Malzahn, Robert Meier, Helen Moser, Catherine Novoselec, Jeanette and Joanne O'Banion, Alice Peters, Doris Schneeberger, Shirly Seiffertt, Lillian Sobczyk, Shirley Stock, Walter Thouvenin, Gloria Webster, Rita Zarcharski, Alice Kock, Jenrose Raetz, Ruth Newton, Alice Miller, Charles T. Meyer, Joseph A. Johnson, and Margaret, Virginia and Dolores Hirbe. Let us hope that the good work they did for their city will not end but continue on into the future.



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## CHAPTER I

# Three Foreign Flags

CLAIMED BY SPAIN 1492-1673

**T**HE WRITTEN HISTORY of the American continent dates back only four centuries, yet within that comparatively short period of time, valuable additions to the world's stock of knowledge have been added.

In the opinion of archeologists, our area was the location of one of the most densely populated Indian settlements in North America, one of the largest being Cahokia. It supported a greater population than anything Columbus had seen, but only the ruins remained when the first white man arrived here.

Spanish claims to this region were, of course, based on the discovery of America by Columbus in the year 1492. The claims of the Spanish were further strengthened in 1541 when De Soto landed in the Mississippi River area. His indefinite claim included Illinois, since it was located in the valley of that river.

## SETTLED BY THE FRENCH (1673-1763)

When the white men came to Illinois in 1673, they found it to be the domain of the Illinois Indian confederacy of five tribes, namely, the Metchigans, Kaskaskians, Peorias, Cahokias, and the Tammarois. In our area were the Cahokias. The Tammarois lived a little farther to the southeast. They did not remain here, however, for the other Indian tribes made raids against them until ultimately, our Illinois Indians were decimated, and

the fragment of these tribes found refuge for a time in the American bottoms.

The first white men to look upon the territory which now includes St. Clair County were two Frenchmen from Canada, Marquette and Joliet. Looking for a route to Asia, they went down the Mississippi as far as the Arkansas; but when they learned that the river flowed into the Gulf of Mexico, they went back, and camped for a while in St. Clair County near the vicinity of Cahokia.

The next Frenchman to follow was La Salle. He sailed along the Illinois River to its mouth in 1679 and named it after the tribe of Indians which he found living along its banks. It is derived from the Algonquin Indian word, Illini, signifying perfect and accomplished men. The suffix "ois" is purely French, and denotes a tribe of superior men.

The first French settlement was made at Cahokia by Father Pinet in the year 1700. Their predominant traits were their lack of ambition, their sociability, their devotion to the Catholic Church, and their tendency to eat, drink, and be merry. Being amicable they didn't have much trouble with their neighbors, the Cahokias. Their sociability was well shown by the way they settled the county. They were never willing to live on separate farms, but preferred the village where they were in close contact with one another. Their meeting place was usually the ballroom where came the priest, the patriarch of the village, the jolly benedicts, the talkative patrons, the quick-eyed youths, and the radiant maidens. Old and young, rich and poor, came together in a common bond of merriment. Sunday morning found every good Frenchman in church and the afternoon and night in the ballroom. Hospitality and generosity reigned supreme.

A small but hardy breed of horses had been brought by them from Canada. These horses had degenerated in size because they had not been given proper care. The French worked them

sometimes singly, sometimes in pairs, and sometimes one hitched before the other. Reins were not applied in driving, but the whip of the driver with a handle about two feet long and a lash two yards long was used most effectively. No one at this time thought of having his horses shod. Oxen, yoked by the horns instead of by the neck, were also sometimes used to draw a plow or cart. These crude carts were made entirely of wood and later Americans called them bare-footed carts because they were without iron rims.

The education of the French was very much neglected. Their handwriting was poor and their spelling even worse. Most of them couldn't write at all but signed their names with a little cross. Since they were unmarried, the French government shipped girls to Louisiana to become their wives. These were nicknamed "Casket girls" because of the small trunk of clothing the government had given to each.

Kaskaskia was settled in 1701, sixty-three years before St. Louis was established. It is one of the oldest and at one time was the most important city west of the Alleghanies. It was the first capital of Illinois, had the first bell, the first college, the first church, the first newspaper, the first Masonic Lodge, and the first convent in the state of Illinois.

The first Court House at Cahokia was erected in 1716; it also served as a residence for the man who built it, Francois Saucier. It stood at the edge of the parade grounds then used by the French soldiers who controlled the territory. It was a proud building of square cut walnut logs chinked with mortar and small stones, thirty-eight feet wide, forty-four feet long, and eighteen feet high, topped with a sharply sloping roof of hand-hewn shingles.

In 1719, one of the creeks of our country received its name from the silver ore found there by Phillip Renault. It was assayed to yield \$7.00 a ton. It was discovered near Lebanon on the farm now known as the Jerry Bennett farm. He found

enough to make a good living, but was later forced to abandon it because of hostile Indians.

The Middle West has been, from its earliest date to the present, one of the important areas of the United States. Sixty years before George Washington was born, Marquette and Joliet were exploring the Father of Waters. The year after Washington's birth, the important military post of Fort Chartres was established. Fifteen years after his birth, a mill was built at Prairie Du Pont. It is too bad these early adventurous souls could not fathom the part they were playing in ushering in the great surge to the West and the industrial and economic changes which were to follow in our later American History.

### RULED BY THE BRITISH (1763-1783)

At the signing of the Treaty of Paris, ending the Seven Years' War in Europe, 1756-63, better known in America as the French and Indian Wars, all the territory east of the Mississippi River except Florida was ceded by France to England; but because of Indians and difficulty of travel, it was not until October 10, 1765 that the British formally took possession of Illinois. By this treaty, the French surrendered all claims to the mainland of America to England. The French in this country resented this transfer of rule to England and many departed rather than submit to their new masters. With this army of refugees went most of the French doctors, leaving a free field here for English practitioners. The new doctors found the going rough, since they were troubled with the same old enemies—malarial fever and battle wounds—that had troubled all the early settlers in this region.

Shortly after the Seven Years' War had ended, England issued the famous Proclamation of 1763, a part of which dealt with the Indian question. This document provided that the land between the Alleghany Mountains and the Mississippi River must be reserved for the Indians and that any grant in



that section which had already been made to the colonists had to be revoked. This proclamation was made to satisfy the Indians; but many of the colonists, including George Washington, were frank enough to say that it was only a temporary affair.

The difference between the rule of the English and the rule of the French, from the Indian's point of view, all appeared to be to the discredit of the new regime. The English garrisons in the captured French forts were not given to fraternization. English traders drove hard bargains, and the English interest in settlement rather than trade was all too evident.

Pontiac, an Ottawa chief with far more organizing ability than was common among the Indians, induced the other tribes to join him in a conspiracy against the English to drive them back east of the mountains. The attack began in May, 1763, and the whole frontier region was thrown into a panic. In 1764, two strong expeditions were sent against Pontiac and they easily defeated the Indians. In July, 1766, Pontiac agreed with Sir William Johnson to a treaty of peace.

This, Pontiac's conspiracy, had hardly ended when another great Indian war was fought here in 1769. Pontiac, the Ottawa chief, had been assassinated by an Illinois Indian who had been bribed by an English trader to do the deed, at Cahokia. In this war the Illinois tribes were almost annihilated. While this was taking place in our country, events of importance occurred in other parts of our country. By 1776, Washington had already served as a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses and had married a widow named Martha Custis. St. Louis was settled in February, 1764, and had a population of 600 whites and 150 negroes. In the year 1770, Richard McCarty settled on the present site of East St. Louis. In 1775, when Washington was named Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army, the British regular troops left this section of Illinois. In 1778, Cahokia surrendered to George Rogers Clark.

Thus we see that all three countries, Spain, France, and England had made their contribution to the birth of the state of Illinois. They have all had some part in it, though it be large or small. The master spirits of this voyage of events were Marquette and Joliet, and to them and to their followers belongs the credit of having disclosed to the world a discovery which is second to none in importance and which had crowned their names with immortality.



## CHAPTER II

# Independence Established

### WE BECOME A PART OF THE UNITED STATES



OUR WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE began in the spring of 1775. In the year 1778, George Rogers Clark, the George Washington of the West, with Americans and some French volunteers, was sent by Patrick Henry, the governor of Virginia, to capture the Illinois country. When he reached Cahokia, some Indians ran to the village shouting, "the long knives, the long knives." This caused fear among the villagers, but as soon as the French who were with Clark explained their purpose, the Indians shouted "Huzzahs," for freedom and America. The fort surrendered without a shot being fired.

Partly as a result of this military expedition and partly upon the basis of royal charters granted in the seventeenth century, the State of Virginia claimed the region in which we now live. On December 12, 1778, the legislature of Virginia created the Territory of Illinois, and John Todd, an ancestor of Mary Todd Lincoln, was appointed Lieutenant Commander thereof by Patrick Henry, who was then the governor of that state.

The Treaty of Paris, 1783, granted us our independence from the British and recognized the right of the United States to the Northwest Territory. The change of government did not seem to disturb the English inhabitants of this territory, and for the most part, they remained in that region.

Due to the jealousies that existed between the small states

and the large states, over large western land claims, the small states insisted that these land claims be surrendered to our Federal Government. On September 13, 1783, the Congress of the United States passed an act which stipulated the terms on which they would accept the cession of this Northwest Territory. On December 20, 1783, the General Assembly of Virginia passed an act to authorize the delegates of this state, in Congress assembled, to convey to the United States all the rights which the state of Virginia held in the territory northwest of the Ohio River. On March 1, 1784, the duly appointed delegates of Virginia made their formal deed of cession and on that date the United States officially received the Northwest Territory. It included the territory bounded by the Ohio River, the Mississippi River, and the Great Lakes. Today it constitutes the states of Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and that portion of Minnesota lying east of the Mississippi River.

## OUR INDIAN TROUBLES

By the Proclamation of 1763, the English had forbidden the colonists to emigrate into the territory west of the line drawn along the divide of the Alleghanies. There was no intention of keeping the Americans out of this region permanently, but the English deemed it unwise to give the Indians further cause at that time for discontent by allowing the settlers to move in upon their hunting grounds. The colonists, however, did not take the same view of this matter. Some had already gone into the West and hundreds of families, distressed by the high cost of living brought on by the war, and eager to start life anew on the rich lands of the west, were ready to follow. So, the settlers pushed out along the mountain trails and as early as 1767, permanent settlements began to appear in the Northwest Territory.

At first the Indians in the west were friendly, but by 1786

they were beginning to change. In fact, from 1791 to 1812, our government waged one Indian war after another. Many of the disturbances were caused by the English, who, contrary to the terms of the treaty ending the Revolutionary War, had not evacuated the British forts in this section. Also, prosperous frontiersmen, determined to possess the savages' land, demanded that the government drive out the Indian.

In 1783, James Flannery, while out hunting in the American Bottom was killed by an Indian. In 1786 Indians, attacking a settlement near here, killed James Andrew, his wife, and one daughter, while two other men's daughters, one of James White and one of Samuel McClure, were taken prisoners.

Early in 1787, farmers, when working in the fields, were obliged to carry their rifles; at night they had to keep guard. By the beginning of 1788 the Indian troubles became more acute. William Biggs was captured while he, together with John Vallis, Joseph and Benjamin Ogle were walking from Ogle's Station to the block house fort in the American Bottom. Vallis was killed, but the two Ogles escaped.

The year 1789 was one of increasing Indian troubles for our community. It was then that three boys were attacked by six Indians only a few yards from their block house. One of these, David Waddel, having been struck on the head with a tomahawk and having been scalped and left for dead, later recovered while the others fled to safety.

With the coming of 1793 came more contention and alarm, but the little settlements had been strengthened at this time by the arrival of some settlers from Kentucky. Among these was a family named Whiteside, whose descendants still live hereabouts. The Whiteside men and others, totaling fourteen persons, made an attack upon an encampment of Indians, far outnumbering them, at the foot of the Bluffs. In this skirmish Captain William Whiteside was wounded mortally, he thought. As he fell, he exhorted his sons to fight on and not to yield an

inch of ground, nor to let the Indians touch his body. His son, Uel Whiteside, with a bullet wound in the arm and unable to use his rifle, examined his father's wound and found that the ball glancing along the ribs, had lodged against the spine. With great presence of mind, so characteristic of our backwoodsmen, he whipped out his knife, gashed the skin, extracted the ball and holding it up excitedly exclaimed, "Father, you are not going to die." The old man instantly jumped to his feet and renewed the fight shouting, "Come on boys, I can fight them yet." Only one Indian ever returned to tell his people of their defeat.

The Indians, by 1800, were practically forced out of St. Clair County, but evidence of their once having lived here remained. Many mounds have been left in Illinois by the early Indians, who built them as huge earthen tombs for their dead, as sites for their buildings, or as ceremonial effigies. The Cahokia, or Monks Mound, erected centuries ago by the very early Indian mound builders near East St. Louis, is among the world's largest earth mounds measuring 1080x710 feet and 100 feet in height.

## ST. CLAIR COUNTY CREATED (1790)

In 1778, Virginia laid out a county in this territory and called it Illinois County. When this territory was surrendered by Virginia to the United States in 1784, Illinois County was forgotten. On October 5, 1787, General Arthur St. Clair from Pennsylvania was appointed governor of this Northwest Territory. In March, 1790, he visited Kaskaskia. On April 27, 1790, he issued a proclamation creating the county of St. Clair with Cahokia as the site of the County Court. It was to include all of the southwestern part of Illinois, and since it was the first county created in what is now Illinois, St. Clair County has often been called, "The Mother of Counties." The eastern and northern part of our state together with a part of the

present state of Indiana were included in Knox County. Illinois remained a part of the Northwest Territory from 1787 to 1802 when our state became part of Indiana Territory and remained a part of it until 1809. Other counties were created until in 1818, when Illinois was admitted to statehood, there were fifteen. The number has since increased to 102, all having been created before 1860.

The first settlers to arrive in St. Clair County were not foreign born, but they were 154 native Americans who came to our county from Virginia in 1797. Among them were a physician and several nurses. The journey was difficult and hazardous. Shortly after their arrival, a fever epidemic swept over the travel-weakened settlers and, when brought under control, one half of their number had perished. Lack of suitable equipment and housing accommodations added to their discomfort. Even the nurses, fearing the contagion, foresook their posts and fled to the more densely populated eastern communities.

### ILLINOIS TERRITORY (1809-1818)

Under the Ordinance of 1787, the United States set up a government for the Northwest Territory in 1788 with its capital at Marietta, Ohio, and appointed Arthur St. Clair as its first governor. In 1800, Congress took steps towards the admission of Ohio as a state and the remainder of the Northwest Territory was set up as the territory of Indiana with its capital at Vincennes.

William Henry Harrison was appointed governor of the Indiana Territory on January 10, 1801. His home state was Indiana, and when he made appointments to office, he preferred men from his state. The result was that an anti-Harrison party developed in Illinois led by John Edgar, and William and Robert Morrison.

In 1809, the Territory of Illinois was established. Included

in it were, not only the present state of Illinois, but almost all of Wisconsin, a large part of the northern peninsula of Michigan, and all of Minnesota east of the Mississippi River. Its population in 1810 was 12,282, almost all of whom lived in southern Illinois. Its capital was Kaskaskia.

## ILLINOIS BECOMES A STATE (1818)

The history of Illinois moved very fast indeed, for it had been only a span of 145 years since the white man first came until it was admitted to the Union as the State of Illinois. In 1673, Marquette explored the Illinois River; La Salle had followed him six years later, building Fort Creve Coeur near the present site of Peoria. Soon after, Fort St. Louis was erected on Starved Rock, and at the turn of the century Cahokia and Kaskaskia were settled by the French. In 1763 this area came under the authority of the British, but the forces of George Rogers Clark during the Revolutionary War took it for the United States. It became a part of the Northwest Territory in 1787, Indiana Territory in 1802, was made the Territory of Illinois in 1809, and in 1818 a petition was presented to Congress from the territorial legislature of Illinois by the territorial delegate, Nathaniel Pope, asking for admission as a state. Through the efforts of Judge Pope, the act of admission permitted the extension of the northern boundary to parallel 42° 30' north latitude instead of the southern bend of Lake Michigan. A part of this territory was later taken away from us and given to Wisconsin, but through the good work of Judge Pope, who handled our bill of admission, Illinois kept 8,000 square miles, fifty-one additional miles on the northern border, so as to give us a port of entry for anti-slavery New England, plus a lake front, eight counties, the greater part of six others, and the city of Chicago. The act of admission passed on April 18, 1818 and on December 3, 1818, Illinois became the twenty-first state in the Union.

Kaskaskia was made the first state capital (1818-20) and



Shadrach Bond became our first governor. He had long been active in public life. In 1806 he was the tax collector at Kaskaskia. In 1807, he was the presiding judge of the Court of Common Pleas of St. Clair County and in that same year was elected the first territorial delegate to Congress.

When Shadrach Bond became governor, Illinois did not have the necessary number of people to become a state, lacking 19,742 of the 60,000 population stipulated for statehood by the Ordinance of 1787. Two years of his term were served at Kaskaskia, when it was decided to move the capital to a more central location. The state records were put in a two-wheeled cart and taken to Vandalia, which became our second state capital.

Chicago, known as the "Magic City of the West," was laid out in 1830, and today has a population of over 3,000,000. How it got its name is not known but we are told that in the Indian language the word meant "strong." This is the reason some people think it came from the wild onion which grew so profusely in that neighborhood; others think it was from the skunk which was also common; still others say there was an Indian chief named Chikagou after whom it was named. At any rate, a map published in Quebec at that time gave the city the name Checagon.

The length of our state today is 380 miles, its greatest width 205, and the highest point of land elevation is more than 1,000 feet. It is most hilly in the south and the northwest. It is filled with natural beauty spots, such as canyons, gorgeous palasades, caves, Indian mounds, and forests. Our total area is 56,400 square miles, of which 55,947 are land and 453 water. Our population in 1950 was 8,696,490. The density of population is 157 inhabitants per square mile.

Our official state bird is the Cardinal; our flower, the violet; our state flag consists of a white field upon which is a reproduction of the emblem of the great seal of the state of Illinois in black or in our national colors; our motto—"State

Sovereignty, National Union;" our official song, "Illinois." We are nick-named "The Cotton State," "The Garden of the West," and "The Prairie State."

Water from twenty-three states of the Union crosses Illinois or flows along its boundaries. The rich soil of the prairies, although treeless, is level or slightly rolling but extremely fertile and has contributed much to our greatness.



## CHAPTER III

# Our City Is Born

THE INDEPENDENT PIONEER (1700-1800)

**T**HE MEN WHO WRESTED this area from the wilderness were the greatest of all pioneers. Their sons were among those who later pushed still further westward seeking new frontiers to conquer in the winning of the West.

The early pioneers were fortunate to have settled in the American Bottom. This stretch of land, which is an expansion of the flood plains of the Mississippi River, is located between the city of Alton on the north to Prairie Du Pont Creek on the south, and from the Mississippi on the west, to the Bluffs on the east. It is about 80 miles in length, and 5 miles in width. Its soil is the richest to be found anywhere. It contains approximately 288,000 acres, of which about two-thirds is located in Madison County and one-third in St. Clair County. The soil types include loams, clays, and sands; and of these three, the loams, considered best from agricultural stand-point, predominate.

Traveling conditions on this land were terrible, especially in the early spring. It was a pitiful sight to see a two-wheeled French cart deep in the mire, the man going miles away to look for help, the women sitting among the household goods, and the team of oxen crouching down mournfully in the mud.

These curious two-wheeled French carts were built entirely of wood, having wheels which were rimless, being nothing

more than huge cross sections of trees. The axles were usually six-inch logs which fitted into the holes in the tree sections that served as a wheel. The body was a frame resting on the axles, while six uprights from this frame created the coach, which was simply willow or hazel switches, woven wicker fashion. Entire families piled into these carts. To lubricate the axle, generous portions of home made soap were used, for no other lubrication was available, however this made the wheels turn fairly easily.

The early settler had plenty to wear and to eat, but luxuries were unknown. His food consisted chiefly of deer, bear, wild duck, turkey, quail, squirrel, corn, beans, and wheat. The nourishing food and outdoor life made him healthy, both mentally and physically. He produced and manufactured many things, and this made him independent of the rest of the world.

The American Bottom was a paradise for fishermen and hunters, because the entire region was filled with lakes, sloughs, and ponds. These were well fed by the back waters of the then uncontrollable Mississippi River and during periods of high water were abundantly restocked with thousands of fish. Legend has it that wild swans, ducks, and geese were so numerous on these waters that at times their combined quacking kept early settlers from sleeping at night.

One duck hunter is said to have killed twenty-two with one shot. It was a simple matter for a good hunter to bag a small wagon load in a single morning.

Because of the early settlers' isolation, they had to make their own implements, tan their leather, weave their cloth, hunt game for food and sometimes fight for their lives. Most of them were poor and lived very simply, but all were equal socially. Their homes, clothes and food were nearly all alike, and this greatly helped to make them democratic.

The homes were often located far from the fields. The farming implements were usually of the crudest sort. Horse

collars were made by sewing together plaited corn husks and were usually very easy on the horse's neck. Not much can be said about the harness, as it was usually crudely made. The plow was little more than a stick that scratched the ground. Iron plows were yet unknown, and besides, they believed that iron was not good to use because it poisoned the soil. The early American, though, had ability to get ahead and make money, was shrewd, was superior in practical things, had a very even temperament, could easily adjust himself to trying conditions, and had the ability to pull up stakes and move on if his first choice of land proved unsatisfactory.

The dress of the pioneer was very simple but serviceable. He usually wore a leather or buckskin hunting shirt, leggings that reached to the waist, shoes that were a compromise between brogans and moccasins, and headgear that was a coon skin cap in winter and a plaited straw hat in summer. Men who dressed in broadcloth and wore boots were viewed as a curiosity. In the summer time, they often walked bare-foot to the church, but just before reaching the church they would put on their shoes. By 1820, the style of dress began to change. Factory goods began coming in from the East and gradually relegated the spinning wheel and loom to the realm of the unused.

Women's jobs in the home were plentiful but not easy. They had to be talented as nurses, housekeepers, seamstresses, laundresses, hostesses, and when any possessed all of these abilities, their lives were one great career.

There were few doctors, and illness was often fatal. Malaria and cholera were quite prevalent and took many lives. Wild animals were so numerous that they were a menace to domestic ones. Indian raids were common and many lost their lives in them. Prairie fires caused much damage and suffering. This can well be imagined when sometimes sheets of flame, hundreds of yards wide and many yards high, would sweep over the prairie.

In 1811, there was the great New Madrid earthquake in the Mississippi Valley, so severe, it was said, that the church steeples swayed, that the church bells rang with tremendous sounds, as though some unseen demon was pulling on the bell cord, that cattle ran to and fro, filling the air with bawling, that the soil cracked so deeply that the bottom of the crevice could not be seen, and stone and brick chimneys fell to the ground.

In 1812, a great tornado struck this region. Families took to their cellars, chimneys crumbled, log cabins overturned, and fences and strong posts were carried away for miles. Many people were killed and wide swaths were cut through forests.

Then there was the year of the cold summer when the corn crops failed throughout the United States. No record was kept of the cold in the Mississippi Valley but in New York City on June 7, 1816, there was three-eighths of an inch of ice on the ground and the thermometer fell to 30 degrees.

Partly because of these dangers, the pioneer had a high standard of morals. Theft, forgery, perjury, and the like were of rare occurrence. Drinking liquor was, of course, a phase of social life that was carried to excess in some communities.

The making of the winter supply of candles was a special autumnal household duty, and a hard one too, for the kettles were heavy to handle. Early morning found the work well under way. A good fire was started in the kitchen fireplace under two vast kettles, each approximately two feet in diameter. These were hung on a trammel from a pole, having been filled with boiling water and melted tallow, which had had two scaldings and skimmings. At the end of the kitchen or in an adjoining room two long poles were laid from chair to chair. Across these poles were placed small sticks about sixteen or eighteen inches long called candle rods. If the candles were dipped slowly in a cool room, a good worker could make on an average of two-hundred candles a day.

The precious candles, thus tediously made, were carefully

preserved. They were carefully packed in candle boxes with compartments, covered over, and set in a dark closet, where they wouldn't discolor. A metal candle box hung on the edge of the kitchen mantle shelf always containing two or three extra candles to replenish those which had burned out in the candle sticks.

The American pioneer was perhaps not quite as religious as was the French. His religious meetings were less frequent and more irregular. The older people usually stayed at home on Sunday and read their Bibles. Others would hunt, fish, break horses, practice target shooting, or indulge in foot races. They refrained from all ordinary work except such as was absolutely necessary.

A book entitled, *A Pretty Little Pocketbook*, printed in the United States shortly after the American Revolution, served as a guide for childhood etiquette in many parts of our country. It contained the following reminders: 1. Never seat yourself at the table until the blessings have been asked. 2. Never ask for anything not on the table. 3. Never speak unless spoken to. 4. Always break the bread. 5. Never take butter except with a clean knife. 6. Never throw bones under the table.

The American pioneer, however, was always very friendly, sociable, and ready to welcome a newcomer. When a log cabin was to be built, the neighbors would come to help. Whenever they made social calls, entertainment was in the direct primitive style. The boys would vie with each other in jumping, wrestling, running foot-races, playing leap frog, and shooting. The older men would gather around and listen to some wild adventure story of one of their neighbor's experiences to and from New Orleans. Log rolling, quilting bees, and apple cutting bees called together the men and women, while the youngsters met for corn husking. Provisions for eating and drinking were liberally made, especially the johnny-cake, spread and baked on boards before an open fire.

After the meal, the younger people would turn their attention

to dancing. The table, chairs, dishes, and all things movable were placed out of the way and the puncheon floor was cleared for the dance. The indispensable fiddler was the artist of the occasion, and everything had to be done as it was back in North Carolina, or Virginia, or some other eastern state in which they had grown up. The pioneer jigged, and danced three or four hand-reels, all of which were very lively dances. The most popular was the Virginia Reel. In the early morning all went home, either on foot or horseback.

Corn shucking was one of the most popular forms of amusement for younger folks. When the farmer's corn was ready to be shucked, instead of shucking it in the field as it is done now, the stalks were cut and piled beside the crib. Then all the young men and women were invited and the fun began. Two leaders were chosen who would select sides and at a given signal, the shucking started fiercely. When anyone found a red ear, all shucking ceased for a time until the finder had kissed the girl of his choice on the opposing side.

Another popular sport of the pioneer was the shooting match in which the pioneers would bring their trusty old rifles and spend the day testing their skill. The contestant always shot for a prize, which was often a nice beef steer. Those that were not contestants, came to sit around and talk. Old women came to watch—they usually brought their knitting with them. Often after the match, they would get a fiddler and have a dance. The fiddler was in such great demand in those days, that sometimes the pioneer would send as far as thirty miles for one.

The early American also played cards, especially "Loo"—requisite to gentility—and spent much time at horse races and often squandered considerable money and property betting on them. In 1806 there was a horse race on the ice of the Mississippi River between contestants from Missouri and Illinois.

Some of the early settlers seemed to lack moral virtues. One husband sold his wife for a bottle of whiskey; the purchaser,



in turn, traded her for a horse, after which she was traded again for a yoke of oxen.

At this time, 1799, several incidents happened in Washington which were felt in our immediate vicinity. One of the members of the House of Representatives from the state of Vermont was a witty, red-faced and rabid Republican and Irishman named Matthew Lyons. He and Griswold, a Federalist who was also a member of the House, had a rough and tumble fight on the floor of the House. Lyons, fearless and unafraid to say or publish anything, had criticized in a Vermont newspaper, some laws passed by the federalist government. For this and for the fight, he was arrested, fined one thousand dollars, and sent to prison for four months. Forty years later, after his death, in 1839, the government returned the fine with interest to his descendants, in the form of western lands. John Messenger, one of the descendants, was given a 160 acre farm on the old Collinsville road, which today is owned by a man named George Hoffmann, a lineal descendant of Matthew Lyons and John Messenger.

## THE BIRTH OF OUR CITY

Who the first white man was to set foot on the present site of Belleville remains a question. It is believed by some that French traders and trappers had passed through the woods and prairie that now are occupied by our city.

It is known that in 1794 Reverend James Lemen, Sr., of New Design, in Monroe County, and six other men of his settlement camped here for a week. The camp was under a large pecan tree on the spot where the old Presbyterian Church once stood. They were on a hunting expedition as well as looking for better lands to settle. At hunting they were good, for they killed a bear, several deer, and many turkeys.

Settlements were made in the vicinity of Belleville, and among the first settlers were John Teter, Abraham Eyman, William Mueller, John Primm, Martin Randleman, and Daniel

Stookey. Roving bands of Kickapoo and Pottawatomie Indians were often seen by these early settlers and many of them later fought against them.

The original proprietor of the town of Belleville was the pioneer citizen, George Blair, whose home, erected in 1806, was the first to be built in this city. For several years he kept it as a home and a hotel. As a man he seemed to have no extraordinary talents, but he was prominent because he owned a two-hundred acre farm on which the central part of our city now stands. He didn't like to work on the farm and therefore cultivated only a small part of it. He was not well educated, but he loved to use words of great length even though they were not suited to the meaning he wished to convey. He was good natured and possessed a benevolent spirit.

Contrary to most opinions, Belleville was not founded by the French nor the Germans but was settled by the Americans to protect themselves against the French. Studying the map, it will be seen that our city is ideally located, being about half-way between the two oceans and evenly divided between the North and the South. This places us far enough south to escape the severe northern winters, while our four seasons offer us a variety of climate. The Mississippi and its tributaries tie us closely to the South and West, and the Illinois and Lake Michigan tie us equally close to the North and East. Our location is in the heart of the Mississippi Valley, one of the nation's richest industrial, commercial, and agricultural districts. This valley produces seventy percent of the agricultural products, seventy percent of the petroleum, seventy-five percent of the lumber, and sixty percent of the minerals of the United States.

The greater part of our city is located in Section 21, Township 1, north of Range 8, West. It is situated on a gentle rising plain near the center of St. Clair County. The beauty of the surrounding country is not surpassed by any place in southern Illinois. It is not only equal to but even surpasses many of the



most fertile and productive agricultural regions of our country. In distance, it is about midway between the Mississippi and Kaskaskia Rivers.

Although our city had not yet been officially designated as the County Seat, there was nevertheless a strong desire on the part of the early settlers for a more central location for their county government. The county seat had been at Cahokia since 1790, but this village being French, the Americans were anxious to get rid of the unprogressive ways of these earlier settlers.

The Americans on the high lands east of the American Bottoms outnumbered the old French settlers along the Mississippi River. This almost necessitated a more central location of the county seat than was the village of Cahokia. This question was one of the issues in the election of members for the state legislature in 1813, which was then meeting in Kaskaskia. In December, 1813, the legislature appointed the following committee to select a new seat of justice for our county, 1. John Hay, 2. James Lemen, 3. Issac Enochs, 4. William Scott, Jr., 5. Nathan Chambers, 6. Jacob Short, 7. Caldwell Cains. These men met at the home of George Blair on March 12, 1814, and the majority of them voted to build the county seat on Blair's land. Blair, in return agreed to give them one acre of land for a Public Square.

Up to this time our locality had been known as Compton Hill, but when George Blair decided that he wanted a city on his farm, he said that he had found a place where he was going to form a settlement which might become one of the most beautiful cities of America, and therefore he named it Belleville, from the French word, meaning "Beautiful City." He appointed a surveyor, John Messenger, to lay out the city in the summer of 1814. This survey was completed a few years later by Governor Ninian Edwards and officially placed on record in our County Court. In the spring of 1819 the state granted us a village charter.

The streets were named by Mr. Blair. The most eastward street was called Church Street, while west of that were Jackson, High, Illinois, Spring, and Hill. North and south of the Square, the streets were numbered First, Second, Third, etc. The street extending east and west through the Square was called St. Clair Avenue, but by common usage, it has become Main Street today. Main and Illinois were laid off 66 feet wide and all others 49½.

When the city was built, in places part of the earth was cut away, while in others it was filled in. To the south of East Main, between High and Jackson, was a pond of water that extended well into High Street. After rains it was often 80 yards long and 40 yards wide. No trace of it is left today because it has been filled in.

In 1814, the Court House was removed from Cahokia to Belleville where it has since remained. In 1793, Saucier's home had been bought by the territorial government for use as a court house of St. Clair county which, at that time, included all of North and Central Illinois.

In September, 1815, the contract for the construction of a new court house was given to Etienne Pensoneau. It was completed and accepted by the county on September 10, 1817. The population of our county was then 3,000, while our little village had only about 150. We remained a village until 1850 when the state granted us a city charter.

## THE PUBLIC SQUARE

When our city was created the Public Square was made a part of it. It is over one acre in size and had been given to the County for its use and benefit. On it later were built the County Court House, the County jail, and the market house. It soon became the civic and commercial center of our city and became so important that all the early history of Belleville revolved around it.

The first use that was made of our Public Square seems to be that it was an inclosure for stray cattle. It was on March 8, 1820, that the village commissioners, Ed. P. Wilkinson and Cornelius Gooding, issued the following official order: "On petition of sundry inhabitants praying that the Public Square in the town of Belleville be inclosed, securing thereby citizens during court from disorderly persons on horseback, and the public buildings from damage, and the trustees of the town of Belleville be authorized to inclose the same, letting streets run around it instead of through it, and that this court allow a reasonable sum for defraying the same." The petition was granted, and the court ordered that the sum of \$100 be authorized to defray expenses. The inclosure was to serve as a stray pound, to be inclosed with posts and rails, neatly finished, and ordered that the clerk certify the same to the trustees of the town of Belleville. It was in this inclosure where was located our first Court House and Market House. It was here that the housewives of the past haggled while at the market, and, before the days of the state penitentiary and county jails, punishment for crimes was here meted out. Here, we had our pillory and whipping posts.

In April, 1822, William D. Noble was punished for forgery by being put in the pillory. He was exposed to the public here for one hour and was required to pay a fine of \$1,000 to the state and \$1,000 to the man whom he tried to defraud. John Reynolds was the judge in the case, William A. Beard, the lawyer, and John Hay, the clerk.

Two walnut trees in the Public Square saved our County the expense of erecting a special whipping post. In the early days there were no jails, and the whipping post was the only means of punishing a person for a minor offense. The guilty one was first stripped to the waist, then tied to the tree, whereupon the sheriff would inflict the legal number of stripes, making blood spurt at every lick. The usual penalty was from five to forty lashes.

One criminal named Bonham, a cripple, was found guilty of stealing a black silk handkerchief and was given five lashes for this offense. In 1833, Sheriff John D. Hughes was the last to use the whipping post, for the state legislature repealed the whipping post and pillory statutes largely at the suggestion of Ex-Sheriff Hughes, who in 1836 had become a member of that body. The walnut tree and the pillory, though, remained for many years, and the latter became a respectable hitching post for the farmers' horses.

Our Public Square changed in appearance with the growth of our city. On it have gathered the successive generations of our city. In July, 1852, the city council, under the guidance of Mayor Goedekeing, adopted a resolution that was to make the Public Square more than a bull pen and offered the following changes: "In the center shall be an inclosure of 119 by 90 feet laid out in grass plots and planted with evergreens and shrubbery and surrounded by a pavement 14 feet wide. The macadamized section of the square will still remain 56 feet wide in the narrowest parts; at the corners it will be 100 feet wide. The center place will be surrounded with shade trees so that we shall have a shady and airy park."

On May 16, 1865, our City Council decided to change the appearance of our Public Square once more. One group of council members was known as the "tear-downers," because they wished to remove the sturdy fence around it, cut down the fifty shade trees, and destroy the beautiful park in the center. Mayor Herman Burkhardt, who opposed this plan, had only three aldermen to support him while five opposed him. To them, it seemed as if the majority of the City Council were bent on committing an act of barbarism, one which in future years would cause the cheeks of the guilty one to tingle with shame. However, the dastardly deed was done, and the mayor and his three supporters resigned saying that it was impossible to give sanction to such acts of vandalism.

The setback which our Square had suffered early in 1865

was only temporary, for the city soon restored it to its former beauty. Once more it was adorned with trees, and in that way it remained for many years.

It was on June 6, 1903, that we had one of the greatest excitements in the history of our city. David Wyatt, a Negro school teacher of nearby Brooklyn, Illinois, shot Charles Hertel, County Superintendent of Schools, because he would not renew his teachers' certificate. Wyatt was arrested and taken to jail, but the aroused citizenry feared that a just and speedy sentence would not be passed upon him, so they stormed the jail, took the Negro from his cell, and lynched him on the Public Square. The County Superintendent had not been wounded fatally and soon recovered.

There have been many and varied surfaces that have covered our Public Square. As a part of the old St. Clair turnpike, the roadways were planked. Later the entire square was covered with cedar block pavement, which bulged when the heavy rains came and again went in place when they were dry. On July 16, 1904, it was completely paved with brick. It was then that it took on the appearance that seems to be more familiar with our present generation. All the street car lines terminated here, and the bulky, brightly painted trolley cars stopped for their passengers in what had been a parking space. Today it serves the same purpose for our city and St. Louis bus lines.

The Public Square today is highlighted by the Veterans' Memorial Fountain and is, indeed, a far cry from the old cattle pound. The fountain in all its beauty does honor not only to the departed veterans but also to those who in the past have built the present city around it. It is today a nucleus of our commercial development. In this area are located the four banks of our city, the department stores, the large grocery stores, hotels, city and county government buildings, wholesale houses, and, near the outer margin, eleven manufacturing plants.

## CHAPTER IV

# Early Life

## THE LOG CABIN

**T**HE FIRST TYPE OF LOG CABIN built in St. Clair County was the French or Palisade type. In this the logs were placed vertically and set in the ground with the cracks filled with sticks and clay.

The next type was the English or the horizontal log type. The pioneer chose the log house because it was the cheapest for him to build, for there was an abundance of timber. Uniform logs were cut the proper length and hewn down on opposite sides to a thickness of about nine inches. Then the neighbors were called in for house raising. The best axemen were stationed at the corners, as notching or dovetailing was the more technical operation. The corner men built up the walls by fitting the ends of the log into the notches. By thus saddling the logs, the walls were raised to a height of about seven feet. The chinks left between the logs were filled with sticks and daubed with clay, which had to be renewed every year. After the house was up and roofed, an opening was cut for a door, usually on each side to afford air in hot weather—or if a window instead—it was covered with oiled paper. The door was made of spliced clapboards, hung on wooden hinges. The latch, also wood, manipulated by a strap attached, was hanging outside through a hole, and was pulled in to lock the door. The chimney was built of stone laid flat and heavily coated with clay. The floor was made by laying sleepers on the ground to be covered with planks when obtainable. When not obtainable, puncheons—



that is, one length of logs split in half, laid flat side up, were used. No nails or other metals were used, wooden pegs being employed where necessary. Usually a ladder led to the loft which was used mostly for storage space. The inside of the house was as simple and primitive as was the outside. A huge fireplace furnished heat and means of cooking. To keep the house fairly warm, the ceiling was insulated with wolves' skins or other pelts or with the soft bark of bass wood. Light passed through greased paper windows. The furniture was always handmade. The axe and the auger were the best tools. The table was nothing more than a puncheon with four legs inserted in auger holes. Chairs were usually mere stools with three legs. The bed was built in the corner with three of its corners fastened to the wall and the fourth to a peg in the ground. Some who were more mechanically inclined fixed the bed so it could be drawn up and fastened to the wall in the daytime, thus giving more room in the cabin. The eating utensils were mostly of pewter and wood. While some early settlers had knives and forks, most others did not. The pack knife or butcher knife served all purposes at the table when no others were to be had. With dippers made of gourds and buckets of hard-shelled squashes, preparing a meal was a difficult task and required many hours of hard labor.

Besides growing his own food, the pioneer also made his own clothing and tools. Every home had its own spinning wheel, for it was necessary to spin the wool that went into the making of socks, stockings, mittens, shawls, mufflers, and wristlets. Their homes were poorly equipped in that day, for there was no running water, no gas, no electricity, no refrigeration, and the old back-yard well was about the only means available for keeping foods cool, and preventing their spoiling.

## PIONEER DRESS

Measured by styles of today, the dress of the early French and English pioneer was very queer indeed. In the summer

the men wore coarse blue suits, changing these in the winter for clothing made mostly of buckskin. The women wore neat fine linsey-woolsey dresses, made at home and colored to suit the fancy with homemade dyes which were made by boiling alum, copperas, and madder, with the bark of trees. Calico or gayly checked goods were used in making bonnets. They had little or no jewelry; even a ring was a rarity. Their feet were shod in a sort of deerskin moccasin, while the men wore a coarser and a much stronger shoe made of thick leather. French women have always had a great love for things that are pleasing and beautiful, and even at this early day they followed the fashions of Paris and New Orleans. Blue seemed to be the predominant and favorite color of both of the sexes and they used it not only for their clothes, but wore blue handkerchiefs on their heads in winter time as well, preferring this instead of a hat, or a cap. Instead of a coat they preferred a sort of capote, which was nothing more than a blanket.

The dress of the early American was, of course, simple. If a hat was worn at all, it was usually made of homemade material. Shoes were merely moccasins or tanned leather shoe-packs. In the summer, many of these things were unnecessary and at that time of the year, they often went bare-foot, and the men wore a blue lined hunting shirt. The capote was made loose permitting freedom of action, with a cap or a cape to turn over the head. Usually underneath this garment a vest of striped linsey-woolsey was worn. The later settlers usually wore homemade shirts of flax or cotton, although a few wore calico and checked shirts. Their pantaloons were made of deerskin, linsey-woolsey, and sometimes coarse blue cloth.

The dresses in that day were made fuller and longer than they are today, usually needing about eight yards of material. These dresses were plain, with four widths in the skirt—the two front widths gored, and the waist very short, with a draw string behind and across the shoulders. The sleeves were enormous in size and padded like a bolster above, but tapering to the



wrist. These were called "mutton-leg" or "sheep-shank" sleeves. They were kept in shape by means of heavy starched linings or feathers.

## EARLY SOCIAL LIFE

There were few people in the world that were easier to approach and become acquainted with than the early American people. Strangers, if they conducted themselves well, were received most cordially in the best of circles, and the confidence that was placed in them, upon even short acquaintance, was remarkable. Probably this was due to the fact that there was such a similarity of ideas on general subjects. Perhaps it was democracy at work. In the social life of early days, dancing was the favorite pastime, with the waltz, the aristocrat of all of the dances, leading. Gallant men bowed low before their Lady Fairs, their way of asking them for the next dance.

Women in the 19th century possessed unsurpassing graces, perhaps more than are found in the young ladies of today. They were taught to be modest and their mode of dress suggested that they were so to the Nth degree. Their finery of dress and delicacy of manner inspired robust men of that day with an over-whelming desire to protect them from the harsh world. They seemed like delicate flowers, and there was a dash of chivalry as the beau of that day stopped to kiss his sweetheart's hand and ask that he might be her stalwart protector forever.

With music as the chief source of entertainment, it was only natural that concerts and operas had a more or less universal appeal. On these occasions women appeared in formal attire, always wearing wraps called opera cloaks.

Then there was the Home Circle and the Pecan Club, composed for the most part of the same young men who attended the operas. These clubs were of a social nature, and for the men only, but in their more formal gatherings, they also included

the fair sex. The registers of these groups included such men as Fred Daab, Louis and Dave Rentchler, Charles Eimer, George McRogers, Charles and Hugh Harrison, and James A. Willoughby. Socially prominent in these were such young women as Emma Camfield, Lena Abend, Anna Rentchler, and Fanny Knab. On one occasion the Home Circle entertained its members and friends at an elaborate masquerade ball in the Liederkranz Hall. Erected in the middle of the dance floor was a fountain, the sprays of which poured out Hoyt's German Cologne. As the dancers glided past the fountain they flicked out their handkerchiefs into the spray so that they might carry home the fragrance that permeated the air that night.

For the older generation of today there will never again be times like that. Even in card playing and dancing the good old days are gone. Around the turn of the century, euchre, whist, pinochle, and bridge were inaugurated and the younger generation spent many pleasant hours with this new pastime. The old dances, the schottische, lancers, cotillion, and quadrille have now been replaced by the tango, fox-trot, charleston, rumba, and conga.

The automobile has taken the place of the horse and buggy, the streamlined motor-driven train has replaced the coal-heating iron horse, all maniacs for speed today. The older folks look askance at the hectic scramblings of the present day generation in their mad search for excitement and pleasure. They seem to think that we have too many automobiles going in too many directions to too many places in too great a hurry.

In the by-gone days, the youngsters never lacked fatherly advice. Regular lovelorn columns were not unknown in the newspapers of that day, and on November 11, 1864, Joseph Billings wrote the following in one of the local newspapers:

"Dear Girls: A blessed future awaits you. Take lessons on the piano at once as the pianos are getting scarce. By all means

learn to play the new songs just out. When John Brown is over it will be Father Abraham's coming. This stanza took first prize at the State Fair. Don't be afraid to get married; your Ma wasn't afraid. Learn how to knit puddin bags to put your hair in. Be virtuous and pretty. Eat slate pencils as they will make you spry at figures. Drink cologne water as it will make a good smell. Let your petticoat drag on the sidewalk, and if any man steps on it and tears off the rim, slap his chops at once. If you have small feet, keep them hid as small feet are out of style. Study travels such as Tom Moore's are considered first rate. If you can spare the time, be lively and smart. Remember one thing—there isn't anything in this life worth living for but a rich husband; if you don't believe me, ask your Ma. If you have red hair, you had better exchange it for black, as black hair, they tell me, will be worn much next year. Don't have anything to do with the boys unless they mean business. If you don't know how to dance, you might just as well join a traveling nunnery at once for you are played out."

Then, as now, the wedding was the most exciting event of all. Guests came on foot, on horseback, and in wagons, to the home of the bride. The wedding dinner was a veritable feast for it contained four kinds of meat; namely: bear, venison, wild turkey, and wild duck. Eggs were both wild and tame while sugar was of the maple variety and in lump form. The lumps were tied on a string which the user would have to bite off for his coffee or whiskey. The syrup was passed in big gourds and was of two varieties, peach and honey. After the wedding dinner the people would dance until morning, the music being furnished by the violin and guitar.

Shortly after the wedding, the men of the neighborhood came together to build the log cabin for the newlyweds. Sometimes this was completed in a single day, but could not be occupied by them until after a house warming at which all the young people met, making merry again until the early hours of morning.

## EARLY EDUCATION (1700-1865)

Life being very simple, the settlers didn't feel the need of education. So few were educated then that in 1790, when General St. Clair came to this territory to organize a government, he had difficulty in finding men with enough education to hold such offices as Justice of the Peace, Constable, Clerk, or Sheriff.

Later, after the population had increased, the demand for education also increased. The first teacher of the children of the pioneer was the mother. She had perhaps been the best of all—for she was the trail blazer of the finest educational system of the world. For the girls, she still remained the most important teacher because sewing was a very essential part of their education. Ready-to-wear establishments were unknown and dresses, therefore, were not turned out as readily as they are now. Sewing a dress was so complicated that the midnight oil was burned many a night before the dress was finally completed.

For the boys, however, the school master now became the new teacher. Teaching methods in the early schools varied greatly from those of today. Though the old methods are interesting to read about, it is very doubtful if they were ever much of a success.

The first schools in our County were not the now familiar public schools but were called subscription schools. The school houses were rude one story structures, a one-roomed building with a clapboard roof and puncheon floor. Windows were made of greased paper and admitted the only light. A large fireplace extended across the entire rear end of the room, and on cold days a roaring fire of logs piled high sent out heat to warm the legs of the schoolmaster, who usually managed to have his seat in the warm corner of the room. The desks that we have today were as yet unknown, but those used then were slabs fastened up under the sides of the house by pegs driven into the logs and these answered as writing

and ciphering tables, while puncheon boards served as seats. There were no fine maps hanging from the walls, nor a globe in one corner, nor a Webster Dictionary in another. The large blackboards were as yet unknown, nor were they needed in that day as all writing was done with goose quills. In those days when schools were private institutions, good manners were considered as important as reading, 'ritin', and 'rithmetic. The boy, when entering the building, would make a bow first to the teacher and then to the rest of the school. A gentle and affectionate curtsy was expected from the girls when they entered. These things were considered very essential for the making of a polished lady or gentleman and anyone proficient in these was considered well educated.

Studying in these schools was done differently than it is today. Schools then were called loud schools because students studied out loud. It was by no means rare to hear one pupil scanning his spelling lesson, another one his reading, a third singing out the multiplication tables, and a fourth, perhaps, memorizing a poem. Every student was told to study aloud and if his lips were not moving he was punished by the teacher.

Pupils today like to create a sort of sensation by bringing a dog to school and letting it loose in the class room. In the early days, though, students were disturbed by other animals. Sometimes the log cabin school was built on a stone foundation and sometimes on pegs. In either case, the floor was always a foot or two off the ground so that it would keep dry. When a stone foundation was used, there were always openings for ventilation. Hogs would sometimes wander under the buildings and their quarreling and squealing and their occasional raising of a portion of the floor would disturb the quiet of the room and the peace of the teacher.

Corporal punishment of students was practiced to a greater extent in pioneer days than it is now and was more common in the north than in the south because in the south only slaves



were whipped, while in the north they had no slaves and therefore the children seemed to be the ones to whip. Then too, it seemed as if it were necessary that learnin' and lickin' should go together. Other less severe penalties were such as kneeling on peas and wearing the dunce's cap. The teacher's success was often measured by the number of whippings he gave during the year because it was firmly believed that to spare the rod would certainly spoil the child. The story is told that one of the early teachers named Mr. Daily would occasionally get drunk during the school day and when he did he would vary the schedule for the day by whipping the whole school so that his reputation as a teacher might be enhanced. Needless to say, in his case the drinking caused him to fail as a teacher, even though it bettered his whipping record.

The courses of study for the first three years were devoted entirely to reading and spelling, and if a child could read and spell an easy lesson without stammering at the end of the third year, the teacher was regarded as quite a success. In the fifth year, the children were taught to write. Teaching was simple then. The teacher would simply write the entire alphabet on the student's slate and sometimes his handwriting wasn't much better than the student's. This was then copied and recopied by the student until he had attained some dignity of perfection, then began the old copybook writing. This was done with pen and ink on lines that were ruled by the teacher with a lead bullet that had been beaten flat.

In the fifth year of school the child began singing the multiplication tables in their order and sang them until he knew them by heart. Subtraction was more difficult, however, and sometimes just had to be beaten into the student. History and geography were subjects added to the curriculum in 1850.

The pens used by the students were quite different from those of today. The making and selling of the pen and ink was a financial sideline for the teacher as he always furnished this. The pens were made out of quills of turkey and geese and

the clipping of the quills took much of the teacher's time. With use and often with the pupil's disposition, they soon began to scratch. The inkstand was made of horn and firmly attached with a steel point to the desk so that the student could not easily spill it.

At this early day schools were still too small and financially unable to employ janitor service, so the older pupils usually swept and dusted the school room and its furniture. When the fuel ran short—coal was not yet used—the older boys were sent into the woods to cut enough stove wood to last for several days.

One of the early teachers in St. Clair County was John Messenger, who had been educated in the east, and who taught school at New Design in Monroe County, four miles south of Waterloo and no longer in existence, and Clinton Hill just north of our city. Others were Col. W. Case, and an Englishman named Baker. William McClintock taught school near Belleville for only one term. The reason for the only one term was that the boys became too boisterous, and locked him out for refusing the usual treat of a gallon of whiskey, candy, and nuts at Christmas time. Being rather Scotch, he quit in righteous disgust over this incident. Another early teacher was a Mr. Brigham who was succeeded by a Yankee schoolmaster named William Gallup. Gallup kept a very successful school and often had enrolled from 80 to 100 pupils. His method of rewards and punishment were a little more peculiar than the rest. For the good little boys and girls he had a tin pail filled with brown sugar from which the studious and well behaved students, mostly girls, seated in a row, were fed from a wooden ladle. For the rowdy ones he had the dunce's block which was rounded on the bottom on which the unruly student had to balance himself and as soon as he neglected to do so, would fall sprawling and helpless to the merriment of the whole school.

For those that persisted in whispering, he had a split piece

of hickory sapling, shaped much like a clothes pin, into which their tongues were put. Then with their hands tied to their backs, the guilty ones had to stand in front of the class. When the boys were stubborn and hard to manage they were made to sit between two girls. This was usually a sure cure for the younger boys, but today it would have just the opposite effect on those a little more advanced in age.

The schools and the methods of teaching so far described were known as subscription schools. These schools were built by early citizens interested in education for their youngsters, and therefore they were called subscribers of the school. Teachers were not paid by these subscribers but were hired by them. The tuition was paid by the students and could be paid in cash, produce, or livestock. At one time when Mr. Gallup was teaching he had on hand fifty young colts that he had received for tuition payments and with these he carried on a lucrative trade.

There was another type of school; namely, the private school, established perhaps a little later than were the subscription schools. These were owned and taught by their teachers and the teachers were not free to come and go at will unless they closed their school. The private schools established in our city in their order were as follows: 1. Sinclair, 2. Belleville Academy, 3. Aristocratic School, 4. St. Paul's Church, 5. Southern Illinois Conference of Female Academy, 6. Luthern Church School, 7. Kindergarten Private School.

The first record of any school taught in Belleville was a private one taught by Mr. Sinclair in 1815. Although records on all early schools are scarce, the next one we know of was taught in 1823 by a Mr. Elihu Shepherd, a well-educated man, who came from New York. The Belleville Academy was organized in 1821 and its object was to afford the young men opportunities for higher learning. It was taught by a William Turner but without much success.



In 1824, a Mr. John Dennis of Virginia opened a school which did prove to be a success and it was called the Aristocratic School. The Belleville Academy was located on the west side of South Jackson Street south of Lincoln Street about where the Jackson Street Methodist Church now stands, while the Aristocratic School held its sessions in the Mitchell building on the north side of the Square where now stands the Belleville National Bank. It was patronized by many from here and St. Louis. Mr. Dennis conducted another school in a small building on South High which is still standing today at 304 South High. In 1856 he was appointed a teacher in our public schools and taught here until his death in 1869. His private school had been the first in the state to teach Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. The boarding school which he maintained at 304 South High also served as his home at one time. One of his most noted students was James B. Eads, the builder of the Eads bridge. Here also were educated some of the boys of the wealthiest Belleville families of that time, all of whom, in later years, were proud of the education they had received from the likeable Mr. Dennis.

There were several other private schools, among them being one that was maintained by the Reverend John F. Brooks, a Presbyterian minister, and it was rather pretentious for the time. It, too, was also located on South High and contained blackboards, maps, charts, globes, and other equipment not found in the other private schools. Another was taught by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Edwards in what was then the Odd Fellows' Hall located on the present site of the Lincoln Hotel.

The first step towards the establishment of free schools in Illinois grew out of the enactment by Congress in 1875 of a land ordinance for ascertaining the mode of disposing of the lands in the western territory. Out of this, largely because of the work of Thomas Jefferson, grew our system of townships, one section in each having been set aside for maintaining public schools. The first school districts in St. Clair county to be

organized under this law were in 1825. Those created were Cherry Grove, Turkey Hill, Sugar Creek, Ogle Creek, and Mount Pleasant.

The first city school board was elected in 1847 because the subscription schools, private schools and church schools, had been unsatisfactory. Citizens met in the Belleville House in October, 1848 and there laid the ground work for the first public school system in Belleville. Henry Goedecking, president of the board, inaugurated the system, selecting the Odd Fellows Hall (where Hotel Lincoln now stands) as the place where it should be located and he saw to it that local craftsmen made the necessary equipment. It was to be supported by both tuition and money from the school fund.

The salaries of the country grade teachers as late as 1850 were as low as \$25 per month for men and \$12.50 for women. The women then weren't regarded as good teachers as were the men because they lacked physical strength, which was so essential for keeping a good school.

When, in 1855, the Public School law became effective in Illinois, the school association of Belleville disbanded and the present system, state and district supported schools, began. Our city then had no school buildings of its own so classes had to be held in rented quarters, and these were held in the Odd Fellows' Hall, the Advocate Building, empty stores, basements of churches, etc., some of which were poorly lighted and ventilated, but cleanliness, comfort, and health were not so highly evaluated then as they are now.

In the city school board election of 1857, Phillip B. Fouke, William Lorey, and William Erhardt were elected to serve on the city school board, but all declined to qualify for their position. Another election was then held and Phillip B. Fouke, who had declined the first election, was named with C. P. Ellis and Jacob Lehr as the directors. Fouke enjoyed the work so much that he later ran for the president of the board and was

elected. It was in this new system that two of our greatest educators, George Bunsen and Henry Raab, came into prominence.

## EARLY DOCTORS (1700-1901)

With the arrival of the first white man came also the word medicine. The native French word was "medicin" which was gradually changed by the Indian and the white settlers until we have the word medicine.

To the Indian this word meant mystery. Thus a "medicine man" also became a mystery man. The first medicine for the Indians was made of herbs and plants. The bark of the white spruce trees when boiled in water produced a liquid which was very useful in cases when the patient had contracted malaria. The chief source of poison for the Indian was the toadstool, and many a white man was killed by an arrow coated with this poison. For relaxation and peace of mind he turned to tobacco leaves. He was also familiar with plant oils and many of the simple drugs which we still use today. A root which was very pungent, and tasted like gun powder when crushed by the teeth, was employed to counteract snake bites. This root was generally masticated before being applied to the bite. The plant from which it was derived had several stalks about a foot high covered with white flowers. He also used another powder which he applied to dislocations and open wounds. The percentage of cases in which gangrene set in after being treated with this substance was remarkably low.

When the practical methods of healing failed, the Indian turned to his superstitions because the Indian preferred death to a lingering illness and therefore the "medicine man" was given only a short time to effect a cure. He would first advise the patient to get as much sleep as possible and if this didn't help, all the sick man's friends would dance around him, chanting their weird rituals. Then the patient was given a

medical examination, a few oils and herbs, and the "medicine man" departed. After the patient got well the "medicine man" was given a feast as his reward.

The medical work for the French was done by their missionaries who cared not only for them but also for the Indians. They administered not only the spiritual needs of the inhabitants but the sights of physical suffering that they encountered prompted them to acquire such medical knowledge as their ecclesiastically trained minds could grasp. They practiced bleeding, divine healing, and healing by the use of prayer. Their methods were very crude, but proved to be a vast improvement over the earlier Indian treatments. They were unskilled in both the essentials of medicine and surgical methods. Their pet treatment was bleeding, and even though the number of deaths was very high they still believed whole-heartedly in it.

When the English came the practice of medicine seemed to have become a profession. The doctors that served the people would receive in return for their services mostly furs or skins which were valued at approximately twenty-five cents a pound. Although this form of exchange was plentiful in the wilds of the Mississippi, still in some places they had considerable difficulty in making collections. In one instance a Dr. Renal sued Charles Gratiot for the sum of three hundred pounds of deer skins for services rendered for amputating the leg of a visitor in Gratiot's home.

The American doctor, besides being a practitioner, farmed in conjunction with his medical duties. By 1840 there were three prominent doctors practicing in Belleville. A Dr. Smith, the first surgeon of Belleville, was favored especially because of his courtly manner and elegant dress. Dr. Peter Wilkins Randall was loved by the people of Belleville for his superior medical knowledge, and he earned the title of "the best physician Belleville had in those days." However, the most beloved one was Dr. Adolphus George Berchelman, a German, who practiced

here for forty years. His entire life was devoted to medicine and everything he did was in the interest of that practice. Others worthy of mention were: Dr. Charles Woodworth, a specialist in cholera; Dr. William Gale Goforth; Dr. William Roman; Dr. Joseph Green; Dr. Wm. Mitchell; Dr. James Melrose; and a Dr. Hancock.

Surgery has made its greatest strides since 1880 and the use of anesthetics and antiseptics have developed since that time. The old methods of numbing portions of the body preparatory to operating were alcohol, hypnotism, extreme cold, or extreme pressure. Special strong men were hired to hold the patient down during this administration. Naturally there were few operations attempted on the abdomen then and very few doctors would ever attempt an appendix operation. At that time the common operations were the extraction of gun shot, and the amputation of limbs, although a few doctors were quite successful with the removal of harmless tumors.

The practice of medicine had improved somewhat over the earliest pioneer days. Patent medicines were numerous; in fact, so much so that there seemed to be no end of them and each one was guaranteed to be a sure remedy. Medical knowledge being meager, there is no doubt but that many of these patent medicines had only a psychological value. When our ancestors took sick, they hurried to the drug store and there they purchased some "bear's oil," warranted ague pills, or some "Ipecacuanha roots," quinine, morphia, red precipitate, cologne water, Bateman's drops, lemonade powder, or croton oil.

Cupping, today a practically obsolete art, was practiced extensively in the early days. It consisted of drawing the blood from the surface by use of a cup to relieve congestion. After the cup was heated, it was placed firmly over the area to be treated. As the air in it cooled, it contracted, creating a partial vacuum and the suction drew out the blood.

It was often said that the early physician didn't always know



what he was doing, but one thing was certain, he knew what he wanted for his services. The city doctor was usually paid in cash but the country doctor was paid in nearly everything from cash to turnips. The fees were determined by the Medical Society of Belleville which had drawn up what was known as a "Fee Bill."

Charges for such services as cupping, medicine, and mileage were specified. This was given wide circulation so that all patients would know the fee in advance. Some examples of early prices for day services were as follows: (1) Visit in town, \$1.00; (2) Visit in country, \$1.00 for the first mile and \$.50 for each additional mile; (3) Night calls, double day calls; (4) detention or unusual duration of visit, \$.50 an hour; (5) medicine per dose, \$.25; (6) extraction of a tooth, \$1.00; (7) amputation of leg or arm, \$20.00 to \$50.00; (8) attendance of contagious disease, two times that of ordinary diseases.

Although small pox had been put under control many years before, there was nevertheless a mild epidemic of it in 1901, which was followed three years later by a severe one, in which over 4,000 cases were reported. The main cause for this was the negligence of the victims to consult a doctor early enough, the public's misgivings in vaccination, and the refusal to vaccinate even after being advised to do so.

In glancing down the years one sees that only seldom have sons of our physicians followed in the footsteps of their fathers. There are only a few cases where it did occur. Dr. Hugo E. Wangelin has been ably followed by his son, Dr. Evans H. Wangelin. Dr. B. E. Twitchell by his son, Standlee. Dr. Louis J. Bechtold, for many years one of Belleville's leading physicians, has been ably succeeded by his two sons, August and Edmond, and the latter, by his son John, thus making three generations of doctors. Besides these there was the late Dr. Washington West, Sr., whose son, Washington West, Jr., until his death, was one of the town's best physicians and surgeons.

Our physicians today are C. E. Baldree, G. L. Bauer, Charles Bauman, J. D. Belleville, Arthur R. Brownlie, Arthur A. Clyne, Irvin W. Davis, Herbert Dexheimer, W. F. Haines, Jack T. Haskins, R. C. Heiligenstein, R. J. Joseph, Raymond J. Kaye, H. L. Lange, Everett Lanmann, J. J. McCullough, C. L. Martin, George E. Meyer, Jos. H. Needles, Paul Norbet, G. C. Otrich, C. P. Renner, Fred Rose, Wm. F. Rose, L. W. Roth, A. R. Sintzel, Standlee Twitchel, W. H. Walton, J. E. Wheeler, Charles O. White, and C. S. Wilson. Our dentists are Arthur Beske, L. A. Bischoff, H. A. Brethauer, C. R. Conroy, N. H. Feder, C. R. Hough, R. M. Isselhard, Fred Jaeckel, Wallace C. Karstens, John D. Kubitschek, F. M. Kuhn, I. A. Leunig, Sr., I. A. Leunig, Jr. G. R. Martin, Francis W. Nesbit, F. A. Neuhooff, F. A. Ochs, E. L. Rauth, D. R. Robertson, A. D. Schilling, M. W. Wagner, C. L. Wilbret, M. E. Wilbret, M. N. Wilderman and T. J. Winkler.

## THE PIONEER MAKES A LIVING (1814-1850)

As the tide of development of our country surged westward, this community had farms such as could be found only in a few places in the world. The land of the eastern farmer had been poor and rocky and a new farm in this particular location was the dream of the impoverished peasant of Europe, as well as the salvation of the easterner that settled here.

The American Indian was the first to own this land. His title to it was no better than ours; namely, occupancy and use of the soil. When the white man came to till this land, the first plowing was difficult, yet it was a stirring experience for every pioneer. Terrifying stories were often told of snakes scampering in all directions at the approach of the plow and of the unbelievably large numbers that were killed before the first crop was harvested. Oxen were frequently bitten by them and the pioneers, often bare-footed, had to be on constant alert so as not to startle the reptiles, and meet a similar fate.

The gardens of about 100 years ago would surprise some of us today. Planting activities always began in the home and here the little flower and garden plants remained in their little boxes until it was warm enough for transplanting out of doors.

To be sure, no pioneer starved to death, but he had to work hard to eke out a mere existence. One of the regular tasks was the making of corn meal, which was usually done on a grater in the form of a piece of tin, bent in an arc, on which an ear of corn was rubbed. This took quite a bit of time and effort to get enough meal for a loaf of bread.

Some wheat was also raised and when the farmers flailed it out by hand it came out clean, but when it was tramped out by horses, many of our earlier citizens contended the biscuits made from it did not exactly have a true biscuit flavor. By 1840 our community probably produced more stock and grain than any other community of equal size in the Northwest Territory.

Some of the lesser crops cultivated by the farmers hereabouts were cotton, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, and garden crops. The cotton was cultivated, picked, separated from the lint, and manufactured into cloth by hand. The first cotton gin in operation in Belleville was built by Thomas Harrison, and this was quite an improvement, for it made the work much easier.

Other crops raised by the farmers were much smaller in proportion than they are today. Very little wheat was grown, for the demand then wasn't great, nor were there mills to grind or bolt the flour. Harvesting too, was difficult because there was no machinery, only the sickle and the reaping hook. Later the cradle was invented and this was such a great step forward that it was believed impossible to ever improve upon it. No one had ever dreamed of a reaper or a combine.

It was not always necessary to fatten hogs with corn for in that day oak trees were numerous and these produced an abundant crop of acorns that fattened hogs so much cheaper.



Corn for fattening hogs was used sparingly because it had to be used in making liquor and Johnny-cakes and then, too, corn-fed hogs produced a fat that was both sweet and oily.

In the fall of the year, when the days were cool and clear, great supplies of apples, pears, and peaches could be seen on the roofs of sheds in the rear of the yards. These were being dried so they would keep and could be served as fruit in the long winter months.

Business conditions during the war with England in 1812 had taxed the productive energies of the people severely, and its boom was felt everywhere. A general scarcity of money was noted later in all business centers and business in 1816 became stagnant. Streets were overgrown with offensive weeds. All prices declined. A good cow brought \$6.00 a head, a good horse brought \$40.00, and fattened hogs, \$1.50 a hundred weight. Whole fields of corn were often sold for 7 cents a bushel taken as it stood in the field. The number of bushels was usually estimated by the number of rows.

Remedies of course, were attempted to cure this depression. The National government believed in a "hands off" policy, but the state government resorted to various means. It passed bankruptcy acts, stay laws, and brought into existence state banks. These banks proved a boom. Our county was also anxious to do its part to rid us of the depression and in 1817 the county government paid from \$.50 to \$2.00 for wolf scalps, the price varying in accordance with age and size of the animal.

Due to hard times that followed the War of 1812, the pioneer, especially in the West, resorted to bartering. There was a scarcity of money and that brought about counterfeiting. Much of the money in circulation at that time was of dubious character. Law enforcement was poorly organized in the pioneer's days and therefore citizens often had to take it upon themselves to enforce the law. When this was done it was called taking cases to Judge Lynch's court. Counterfeit notes were so

numerous that in 1815, a company with Dr. Estes as captain, was formed to promptly mete out "lynch justice" at a place near Silver Creek. This was so effective that the offenders soon fled and counterfeit money disappeared.

### VILLAGE LIFE (1814-1850)

In the year 1818, Mr. George Blair, owner of the land on which Belleville was built, sold all of his interests to Mr. Etienne Pensoneau, a French Canadian who could barely speak English. Pensoneau, a wealthy slave owner, conducted a dry goods store located near the Richland Creek but all his wealth and prestige contributed nothing to the growth of the city.

Ninian Edwards, the first governor of the Illinois Territory, bought out Pensoneau in 1818. No individual in Illinois was better qualified to lift Belleville out of the stagnation into which it had fallen than was Mr. Edwards. He possessed both wealth and talent, and being very ambitious to increase his own fortune, never permitted an honorable occasion to escape when he could make money. He was an accomplished orator, a classical scholar, and possessed a very fine library, which he used extensively to further his own education.

In February, 1819, there occurred one of the most lamentable incidents in the history of our city: the duel in which Alphonso C. Stuart was killed by Timothy Bennett. A horse, owned by Bennett, had the habit of breaking loose and straying in the neighboring field, which belonged to Stuart. On one occasion one of the men working for Stuart peppered it with beans. This greatly angered Bennett. When he told his friends Jacob Short and Nathan Fike about it, they suggested it would be sport to have him challenge Stuart to a sham duel, to which Bennett agreed. The preliminaries were all arranged in the old Tannehill Hotel that stood on the corner where now stands the National Hotel. The rifles were to be loaded with powder

only, but just before starting to the grounds where the duel was to be fought, Bennett stepped into an alley and rammed a ball down his rifle. This was seen by Miss Raechel Tannehill, later Mrs. Rader, whose testimony at Bennett's trial greatly influenced the outcome, which was a verdict of guilty of murder.

The duel was fought just south of our present Turner Hall, on February 8, 1819, with Nathan Fike and Jacob Short acting as seconds. When all were ready, the principals were placed thirty yards apart and told to await the signal to fire, but Bennett fired before the signal was given. His aim was accurate, and Stuart fell mortally wounded.

Bennett, Fike, and Short were at once arrested, and Bennett was confined to the County Jail. From this he escaped but two years later was recaptured, tried, found guilty of murder, and on September 3, 1821, he was hanged in a large field located at about the 1200 block on West Main Street. The trial had been the most celebrated and exciting event that had ever occurred in St. Clair County. Such notables as Judge John Reynolds, Prosecuting Attorney Daniel P. Cook, and Defense Attorney Thomas Hart Benton, a U. S. senator from Missouri, took part in it.

The original streets of Belleville were mere paths through corn fields. Their extended lengths and improved condition have been an accurate guage of the city's growth. As late as June, 1843, the streets were still in their natural condition. In wet weather they were almost impassable because of the deep, sticky mud. In dry weather they were covered with a deep layer of dust.

The first general store in our city was built by Joseph Kerr and was located near Chapman's Mill. The general stores, however, were not as interesting as the early grocery stores and of these a wealth of legends has been handed down. Old time stores sold "from the barrel," and "out of the box." Package goods were not thought of, and one can imagine what a peculiar

mixture of taste and odor resulted when the dried apple barrel happened to stand near the herring barrel. Grocers did not always remove pickle or herring juice from their hands but went with dripping fingers into the cracker box. There were no deliveries. It was up to the customer to take his purchases home. Even as recent as Civil War days, there was not a business house in the city that had a delivery wagon. It was cash and carry on a rigid basis. The objection to delivery services was mostly that it would take all the profits. They raged at the newspaper editors, who dared talk of delivery wagons. The first firm to get one of these was the Hartman Brothers, when they opened a new store at Main and Church streets. The owners, as well as the community, were proud of this neatly painted free delivery wagon.

Self service, as practiced today, was not yet thought of and would have entailed the services of a detective and a weight lifter. The grocer had it somewhere, but it was so well hidden from the customer that only the grocer and God, and sometimes only God, knew where.

The list of items sold in the early days were long and varied and included such things as these: brimstone (now sulphur), old monganhela whiskey, percussion caps, sperm candles, lead shot, saleratus (baking soda), New Orleans loaf sugar, raw coffee beans, Boston nails, paper, tobacco, salted fish, spices, raisins, rectified whiskey, malaga wine, epsom salts, sperm, star, and mould candles.

Early travel was slow, difficult, and very uncomfortable. Stopping places for travelers were less numerous than today but Belleville at that time boasted of three very modern hotels. They were all equipped with livery stables, much in the manner that the present day hotels provide garages for the cars of the guests.

At that time too, there seems to have been price regulation. In 1808, the County Court ordered the rates for hotels to be

as follows: meals, twenty-five cents; one half pint whiskey, twelve and one-half cents; bedding, twelve and one-half cents; French brandy or rum, twelve and one-half cents; stabling per day, fifty cents.

The first hotel was built by James Tannehill on the south side of West Main right next to the Public Square, where the National Hotel was erected in 1857 and still stands. His hotel had a main building that was two stories high but additions and sub-additions later gave it the appearance of a French village.

To induce the guests to pay their bills when due, hotel managers sometimes gave special rates for advanced payment. Regular board with lodging if paid in advance, two dollars per week; regular board with lodging if paid at close of week, two dollars and fifty cents; regular board without lodging if paid in advance, one dollar and fifty cents; regular board without lodging if paid at close of week, two dollars; board single day, seventy-five cents; single meal for a man and one feed for horse, forty cents; the last being the most interesting of the combination offers.

The Mansion House was located on the corner of Main and High Streets where the Lincoln Theatre now stands. It was built in 1825 and was razed in 1919. The present theatre is marked with a plaque reminding us that the Mansion House once stood there and was host once to Charles Dickens, who mentions it in his American Notes.

The Franklin Boarding House, kept by P. K. Fleming on the north side of East Main Street between the Public Square and High Street directly over the John Murray store advertised as follows: "Regular boarders and travelers on horseback, or in carriages, accommodated on the usual terms. All horses will be well taken care of and no exertion will be spared to endeavor to make both man and horse comfortable."

Our village had grown rapidly and by 1840 boasted a popula-

tion of about 2,000. They came from all parts of the world and nearly all of the languages of Europe could be heard on our streets. The predominant one was English, but French and German were almost as numerous. Even the sons of Ireland spoke in their original Gaelic. By 1840 the sons of Africa also filtered in.

The Public Square at that time was surrounded with fine buildings and was intersected by two heavily traveled streets. Our village was also located on the great Western Mail Route so that a four-horse mail stagecoach passed through it each way, every day. This gave our early settlers great mail facilities.

Homes in the early days were built very close to the street line, so that every home could have its back yard and garden, wherein, with much work and patience, amazing results in both flower and vegetable plots were achieved. Furniture used in these early homes, if still available, has become cherished heirlooms. Its construction was sturdy and it exhibited true craftsmanship. With expert knowledge of retaining the natural depth and beauty of the wood, and with careful and painstaking finishing, much of it today beautifies present day homes.

Since mosquitoes were a greater menace in pioneer days than they are today, additional protection had to be taken. The mosquito bar is a relic that the present generation knows very little about. It was suspended from the ceiling above the bed with an opening on one side so that access to the bed could be had. If one could find the opening he could retire and sleep with a sense of protection unless one of the pesty things had entered the inner confines before.

Heating the early home was a real problem for hardly ever was there enough heat to be really comfortable. Plumbing in the early home was unheard of. The result was that often our ancestors had a hearth that was much cleaner than was their skin. Washing all over wasn't supposed to be very healthy as was often proven by those who had contracted a cold after



taking a warm bath. Some said that many children were sewed in their winter underwear when the weather became cold, not taking it off until the spring arrived.

Because there was a lack of heat and a lack of plumbing facilities, bathing was not a very pleasant experience. The home was not equipped with a private bathroom and therefore it was difficult to have a room in which a bath could be taken at its proper temperature. Even bath tubs jammed against a stove were not very comfortable. The first bath tubs had a scratchy film of sand in the bottom to prevent falling in the tub.

In 1848 Mr. Simon Eimer changed his home into a private bath house and invited all citizens of this and other towns to indulge in this new pleasure. His home was located near the Catholic Church and this helped greatly to increase the number of his patrons. All considered bathing a luxury, but admitted that it was conducive to health, particularly in the summer. It was enjoyable too because the individual bather could regulate the heat to the desired temperature. The local gentry took to the idea and made their weekly "dunking" a sort of social event, with the result that there was a general rush for Eimer's bath tubs on Saturday nights.

The bath house in Simon Eimer's home was nothing more than two large rooms that were filled with several rows of bath tubs. Hot water was supplied by huge old railroad boilers and here, in merry fashion, our early citizens would splash about.

Not all could take their baths on Saturday night and those who couldn't get in came back on Sunday morning. The bath tubs must have taken a terrific beating on Saturday nights and a lesser one on Sunday mornings, but the regular Saturday bath soon became an established rule for our citizens and is one of the interesting chapters of early American history.

With the advent of modern plumbing came the death of the bath houses. Soon plumbing became so reduced in price that

all, and not only the select few, began to take their Saturday baths.

Food supplies for winter were usually very plentiful but were acquired at the cost of much labor. Before winter set in the gleaming copper kettle worked over-time making apple butter, canned fruits, and vegetables. This work was usually done in the summer kitchen, which also served as a laundry.

As time went on the village grew; until now there was ample work for fifteen doctors, ten lawyers, and a due proportion of clergymen. The three hotels, all on Main Street, did a thriving business; our fourteen retail stores sold about \$40,000 worth of goods per year; and the two drug stores were always busy.

Our shoe cobblers in 1844 not only repaired shoes but also made them. If you saw a sample shoe in his store that you wanted he would take your order and in about two weeks you could call for your pair of shoes. For payment you could give him either cash or hides and these could be either green or dry. The prices for his shoes were as follows: Men's kip brogans, eighty-seven cents to one dollar and twenty-five cents; calf skin brogans, one dollar and twenty-five cents to one dollar and sixty-two cents; boys' shoes, seventy-five cents to one dollar and thirty-seven cents; women's shoes, eighty-seven cents to one dollar and twelve cents. The shoes were made out of cow hide but the kip brogans could be made of any young hide. The brogans were heavy, a rather crude shoe, and it was difficult to tell the difference between the right and left shoe.

To become an acknowledged leader in any profession requires a lot of work and studying. This was especially true of the early lawyers of our city. The first of these to locate here were Mr. William Mears, Mr. Robert McLaughlin, A. C. Stuart, and Adam W. Snyder. Mr. Stuart was a man of learning and talent, but died early because he worked and played too much and rested too little. Mr. Mears, who was appointed At-



torney General for the Territory of Illinois by Governor Ninian Edwards, was very capable and made a lot of money. Mr. McLaughlin didn't like practising law, so he and Ninian Edwards entered the merchandising business. Their store was located on the north side of the Public Square, near the present Belleville National Bank building. Although Mr. Synder was not an especially popular lawyer, much of his life was spent in public employment. He was a man of genius and possessed great talents. He had a convincing influence on jurors, who nearly always set it down that he was right in his address to them.

June, 1844, became noted for the great flood that completely engulfed the American Bottom. Mississippi River steamers could travel from bluff to bluff. No dry land was visible for miles except a few mounds and high knolls east and south of the village of East St. Louis. Later devastating floods occurred in 1851, 1858, 1862, 1876, 1878, 1883, 1892, 1903, and 1927.

At about this time Belleville became interested in better streets, for the village council passed an ordinance which required every able bodied man over 21 and under 50 years of age to labor upon public roads, streets, or alleys for a period not exceeding five days each year when notified to do so by the street inspector. There was a fine of \$.75 per day if one defaulted.

Just as prices on all things were much lower in the early days than they are today, so too were the city salaries. The incorporation articles allowed the town treasurer a salary of only ten dollars a year. The town clerk was better paid for he received six per cent of all taxes and twelve per cent of all the fines collected. The village assessor and street commissioners received the large sum of one dollar and fifty cents per day. Those that were paid by the day could only collect for the days in which they actively engaged in official duties.

Our village all the while continued to prosper and to grow.

Our natural growth then as now was along the main arteries of travel, the principal streets being Main and Illinois Streets. New houses were always built along roads leading to and from the village. Eventually the roads were so dotted with houses that they became streets. Examples of this are Freeburg, Mascoutah, Lebanon, and Centerville Avenues. Gradually gaps between these roadside advances were filled in and the territory annexed to the city. At the present time, the outlying gaps in the city's far flung stretches are being filled in by the development of territory lying along the belt highways.

## CHAPTER V

# Pioneers

### A DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN

**T**HE HISTORIANS' TEST of an individual's greatness is "What did he leave to grow? Did he start men to thinking and acting along fresh lines with a vigor that persisted after him?" By this test we shall now consider one of our leading citizens.

Other Liberals had already preceded him. They were for the most part men and women of education and culture, who at once began to exert influence on the intellectual and political life of both the state and the nation.

Among these were Theodore and Edward Hilgard, Theodore J. Kraft, Gustave Heimberger, Henry, Joseph, and Edward Abend, Adolph Englemann, John Scheel, and Dr. George Englemann.

The German emigration to our city continued increasing. In 1837 the families of Adolph Hildebrandt, Junius Raith, William A. Michel, Fred and Herman Wolf, Dr. Albert Trapp, Dr. Adolph Berchermann, Henry Schleth, and August Hassel were added to our already large German population.

Gustavus Philip Koerner was born on November 20, 1809, at Frankfort, Germany. When seven years old he was sent to a Model School in that city. In these schools there was little memorizing and the pupils had always to explain the why and wherefore of things. If you failed to study your lesson you were

kept after school to learn the lessons you had neglected. If you were guilty of bad conduct this same thing happened or you remained in during play time. Women teachers in Germany taught the girls knitting, sewing, embroidering, and the like, but for them to teach other subjects in that early day was wholly unheard of, and for them to teach boys was regarded as ridiculous. So Gustavus Koerner had only men teachers. After graduating from the Model School, he continued his studies at the Gymnasium (college) in that city.

In 1828 he entered the University of Gena to study law. Later he transferred to the University of Munich and finally to Heidelberg where he received his Doctor of Laws Degree.

When the Frankfort revolt of 1833 occurred, he at once became active with the Liberals and was wounded in the fighting. Then, with the aid of friends, he fled to France for safety, where he joined a party sailing from Havre to the United States. He arrived in New York on June 17, 1833, and set out at once for St. Louis. There he became disappointed because Missouri tolerated slavery, so he moved to Belleville.

Gustave Koerner threw himself whole heartedly into American life wanting to become as representative a citizen as possible. Hoping to further his education, he took a law course at Transylvania University, which is located at Lexington, Kentucky. Here he hoped to become well versed in American law and also to greatly improve his use of the English language.

While at the University, in company with a friend, he went walking one morning. Stopping at a very large white mansion, their knock at the door was answered by a negro servant who led them into a large and elegant waiting room. It was the home of Henry Clay, who came in and talked with them for an hour. When he found out that Koerner was a German he at once launched into a eulogy of the Germans. "The Germans," he said, "are very honest people, fine farmers, and very industrious. I consider them a blessing to the country

in which they settle. The only thing I do not like is their politics." Completing his course at the University, Koener returned to Belleville where he began the practice of law and entered politics. His law office was in a building which occupied the location of the now modern Elliot Liquor Store.

Upon his marriage to Sophie Engelmann on June 17, 1836, he resided temporarily in the small house that stood at the corner of Main and Church Street, pending his occupancy of the somewhat larger and much more attractive place adjoining the Hinckley Bank. The latter fronted on the Public Square and occupied the present site of the First National Bank Building. Later he lived at the corner of North Second and West A Streets until he built a home at the south-east corner of Abend Street and Mascoutah Avenue.

In December, 1840, Koerner was elected to be our electoral messenger to Washington. The five electors of Illinois met in Springfield the first Wednesday of that month to cast their ballots for Van Buren. Koerner left by boat at once, crossed the Alleghenies by stagecoach and finished the trip by train. He delivered the sealed votes to Vice-President Richard M. Johnson. In Washington he met John Quincy Adams, James Polk, Thomas Hart Benton, and also President Van Buren. Again on December 26, 1840, he made a hurried trip to Baltimore to buy a fire engine for the city of Belleville, and on New Year's Day, attended the public reception at the White House where he met General Scott.

In 1842 he was elected to the state legislature as representative from St. Clair County and had the distinction of being the first German to be elected to that body. In 1842 the English novelist Charles Dickens, while on a tour in the United States, passed through Belleville. He wanted to see the new Court House, so Koerner at once tried to make proper arrangements for such a visit through Judge Breese. Breese though, when asked to give Dickens a seat on the bench, refused to

grant that because as he put it, "He is one of those puffed up Englishmen who, when they get home, use their pen to ridicule and slander us. He can come in, but will be treated like any other mortal." Needless to say, Dickens did not visit the Court House.

Koerner had become acquainted with Stephen A. Douglas while in Springfield in 1840, and the latter came to visit him in 1844. It was then that he made one of his most effective speeches prior to the presidential election in 1844.

Koerner took an active part in politics, but in this he was true always to his conviction, for he was in turn, first a Democrat, then a Republican, and again a Democrat. The first campaigns in which he engaged were those of 1840 and '44. In 1845 he was named a Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court and accepted it because his German friends urged him to, due to the prestige it would give them. He remained on the bench until 1850 when he resigned to enter politics again.

In the year 1852, the great Kentucky statesman, Henry Clay, died. A large meeting was held in our city to express sympathy over his death. Koerner drew up the resolutions and had to support them in a speech, and although he opposed the great statesman politically, the eulogy expressed his true feelings of admiration.

On April 19, 1852, the state Democratic convention met at Springfield, and Koerner was a delegate to it. Mattison won the gubernatorial nomination, while Koerner was nominated on the third ballot for Lieutenant-Governor. In this campaign Koerner and Douglas toured the state, speaking at Freeport, Chicago, Joliet, LaSalle, Peru, Peoria, Peking, Beardstown, Springfield, Carlinville, and Alton. Most of the speaking however, was done by Douglas and as a matter of courtesy, Koerner merely sat on the platform with him.

In January, 1853, he was inaugurated Lieutenant-Governor. Ex-Governor Reynolds was at that time elected Speaker of the



House. Thus both the House and Senate were presided over by Belleville men.

When his party accepted the pro-slavery policies of Presidents Pierce and Buchanan, Koerner broke away from it and played a conspicuous part in the bringing about of a new party. While a member of this new party, he became rather closely associated with Abraham Lincoln, whom he had met at various times before. At a Republican rally in our city in 1856 Koerner introduced Lincoln to the local audience. Commenting on Lincoln and Douglas, Koerner once said that Lincoln delighted his crowds and kept them in a perfect roar of laughter, while Douglas interested them by his impressive way of speaking.

In 1856 Koerner was nominated on the Republican ticket for Congress but was defeated by a fusion of the Democrats and "Know-Nothings."

On May 9, 1860, the Republican state convention was held at Bloomington at which Koerner was elected a delegate at large. These electors, meeting later in Chicago, named Lincoln the Republican nominee for President.

When the Civil War broke out Koerner enlisted and became a Colonel. However, before the end of the war, President Lincoln in 1862 appointed him United States minister to Spain. Here he remained until 1864 when he resigned and came back home. On May 4, 1865, he had the honor of serving as one of the pallbearers at Lincoln's funeral. In 1870, he entered politics again, but was defeated for the United States Senate by General John A. Logan.

On June 26, 1872, the Liberal Republican and Democratic convention met in Springfield and Koerner became their nominee for Governor of Illinois. In this election he was defeated, although he carried St. Clair County by 700 votes and ran ahead of the Liberal Republican state ticket by 12,500 votes, but not enough to overcome Grant's majority over Greeley which was over 40,000.



His last active political campaign was in 1876, when he favored Tilden over Hayes because the former was more liberal. Soon thereafter he retired from politics and spent the rest of his days in peaceful literary pursuits. In 1880 he published a book entitled *The German Element in the United States*. Before that, in 1867, he had published one entitled *From Spain*, while in the latter part of 1880 he compiled, in two volumes, all the important laws of the state of Illinois. He died on April 9, 1896, in his home on the corner of Abend and Mascoutah Avenue, having attained the ripe old age of 86. After his death his grandson, Edgar Rombauer, published his most popular work, *Koerner's Memoirs*.

Many regard Gustavus Phillip Koerner as our most distinguished citizen, for he was a lawyer, a jurist of distinction, Lieutenant-Governor of Illinois, United States minister to Spain, and a historian, but above all he was an exemplary citizen.

## OUTSTANDING AMERICAN PIONEERS

Many able men, some of whom were men of distinction, have at one time or another made Belleville their home. Among the earliest of these we find the names of Stookey, Miller, Eyman, Teter, Lemen, Ogle, Badgley, Kinney, Whiteside, Phillips, Riggs, Varner, Redman, Stout, Pulliam, Messenger, Baker, Reynolds, Bissell, Trumbull, Edwards, Scott, Morrison, Niles, Underwood, West, Baker, and Hay. In 1818, more men settled here, coming from the state of Virginia. Noted among these were James Mitchell, John H. Dennis, and B. J. West, all of whom contributed their bit to the community, for these men were always ready to assume responsible positions of state and national government. Belleville gave Illinois three state governors, Ninian Edwards, John Reynolds, and William H. Bissel; two state superintendents of public instruction, James P. Slade and Henry Raab; two state treasurers, Edward Rutz and Charles Becker; three United States Senators, Ninian Edwards, James Shields, and Lyman Trumbull; two United

States ministers, Gustav Koerner to Spain, and Jehu Baker to Venezuela.

Prominent also in pioneer days was John Messenger, who was born in West Stock Bridge, Massachusetts, in the year 1771. He received a thorough education and acquired a love for English literature and mathematics. In 1783 he left the state of his birth, going to Jericho, Vermont, where he learned the trade of carpenter and millwright. He became so good at this that later, when he married, he made all of his own furniture, from walnut, cherry, and hard maple woods.

While in Vermont he became acquainted with the family of Matthew Lyon. In fact he became so well acquainted with one of the daughters, named Ann, that he later married her.

In 1799, Matthew Lyon and his family, which now included the new son-in-law John Messenger, left their native state and migrated to Kentucky where he founded the city of Eddyville, in Lyon County. Young Messenger, seriously objecting to slavery, moved to Illinois in 1802, although the Lyon family remained in Kentucky. He landed at Fort Chartres, stayed there two years, then moved to New Design. He later bought a large farm north of Belleville which he named Clinton Hill, and here spent the rest of his life.

While living on the farm, he opened a quarry to supply the necessary stones for his home, wells, etc. He also established one of our earliest schools because many of his neighbors were anxious to learn to read and write. He soon decided also that this community needed mail service. Through his father-in-law, Matthew Lyon, who was a representative from Kentucky, he was able to open the Clinton Hill Indiana Territory Post Office. This Indiana Territory had been formed from the Northwest Territory in 1800 and included what is now Illinois.

Having a good knowledge of higher mathematics, he was appointed Deputy Surveyor of the United States in 1832, in

which capacity he surveyed the northern boundary of the state of Illinois.

By an act of Congress in 1809 the Territory of Illinois was separated from the Territory of Indiana and Ninian Edwards was appointed its first governor, with Kaskaskia designated as the state capital.

In 1818 Illinois became a state of the Union and John Messenger was one of the thirty-three delegates who met at Kaskaskia in that summer to frame the first constitution. When statehood had been granted, he became one of the members of the first General Assembly and was elected the first Speaker of the House of Representatives.

In 1802 he organized the first Protestant church in St. Clair County and it became known as the Clinton Hill Baptist Church. In 1820 he surveyed a tract of three and one-half acres and deeded it to the church for a burying ground which is today known as the Clinton Hill or Messenger Cemetery.

The children of John Messenger and Annie Lyon were, in the order of their birth, Amanda, Benjamin, Charles, Delinda, Elon, John, Minerva, Pamela, and Matthew.

On January 16, 1846, John Messenger passed away at his home on Clinton Hill at the age of 75. He was buried at the side of his wife, who preceeded him to the Great Beyond on October 16, 1842. Near him are also buried some of his children and many of his friends and neighbors. A great grandson, George Engelbert Hoffmann, still lives on the Messenger farm on the old Collinsville Road. On July 26, 1942, this great grandson dedicated the first monument in the United States to the battle of Pearl Harbor of December 7, 1941.

Another representative settler whose life was typical of the early pioneers was William Kinney. He was born near Louisville, Kentucky, in 1781, a region that was known as "a bloody battle ground" because of the many Indian wars that took place there. In 1792 when he was eleven years old, the family moved

to New Design, Illinois. His earlier life had been one of constant danger and hardships. Growing to manhood, he bought when but nineteen year old, a small farm just east of Belleville. Settling down there with his wife, he became a prosperous farmer. His wife taught him to read and write, and with the guidance of John Messenger and by diligent application, he became a very well-informed man. He conducted a country store on his farm and sold anything offered or demanded from whiskey to Negro slaves. The store and the farm prospered and the farm grew in size until it included the present site of St. John's Orphanage, formerly known as Glen Addie, on the Shiloh Road. Glen Addie, a pretentious estate, was built by Col. J. L. D. Morrison.

Although primarily a farmer, he also entered the ministry and became quite a distinguished Baptist preacher. This provided him with a good background for it increased his knowledge and made him a good public speaker.

He abandoned the ministry for the political field. Kinney had become wealthy in business and attained prominence in politics. He was either whole-heartedly for or against whatever the issues were at that time. He was elected to the first and third sessions of the State Senate and later served a term as Lieutenant-Governor, but in the election of 1834 he was defeated for governorship. He became president of the Board of Public Works in 1836, from which he resigned within a few years, returning to his country estate where he died in the year 1843, and where he is buried. He was a practical man and his free and easy manner made him very popular with everyone. His great grandson, John Thomas Lienesch, who died in 1944, lived on a farm in that vicinity.

Another prominent native American was Ninian Edwards. He played an unusually important part in Illinois history. When Illinois became a state in 1818 there were practically but two parties, the Edwards party and the anti-Edwards faction.

In the first election of 1818 the Edwards faction won, and Edwards was elected U. S. Senator by the state legislature, holding that office until his resignation in 1824.

In 1826 he was elected governor of Illinois, being the first Bellevillian, although he had but recently come to Belleville, to be elected to that office. He was the third governor of the state. With his political power increasing, he became the hub around which Illinois politics revolved. He did not seek re-election in 1830, but in 1832 he was defeated for Congress. In 1824 he resigned his senatorial seat to become minister to Mexico, but due to a bitter controversy between he and the Secretary of Treasury, he resigned this newly acquired mission.

At one time his political power waned, but he staged a comeback. By birth and by conduct, he was a real aristocrat. He dressed in silk, wore his hair in a pig tail, rode in an elegant carriage, and was accompanied by liveried servants. When our city was visited by the cholera epidemic of 1833, physicians were so desperately needed that Governor Edwards hastened to attend the people of his community. Although the governor had never actually practiced medicine, he had a wide knowledge of the profession. He himself was stricken and died almost immediately, a victim of the deadly malady.

John Reynolds, a true politician in every meaning of the word, was born in Pennsylvania, February 6, 1788, the son of Irish emigrants who moved to Pennsylvania in 1788, and to Illinois in 1800, settling just east of Kaskaskia.

He rose in his chosen profession because of his dogged determination to succeed. He had a flourishing law practice at Cahokia and later at Belleville. So successful had he become that he served as an Associate Judge of the Illinois Supreme Court from 1818 to 1825. He was known as "the old ranger," because in the war of 1812, along with Captain William B. Whiteside, he had taken part in Illinois' frequent skirmishes with the Indians.

From 1826 to 1828 he served as a member of the General



Assembly, finally crowning his political success by being elected Governor of the state in 1830, succeeding Ninian Edwards.

In his campaign for the governorship in 1830 he toured the state on horseback, made speech after speech and caught the farmer's vote with his Irish blarney. He had vote-getting ability and was always ready to donate his legal service to the poor, all of which contributed towards his success.

He was in sympathy with the southern Democrats and championed their cause in slavery. He was for states rights, opposed the National Bank, favored territorial expansion and opposed Lincoln and his Emancipation. Above all he detested the new Republican party. He served ten terms as Congressman from Illinois from 1833 to 1848, and from 1852 to 1854 was a member of the Illinois State Assembly. Later he was appointed Justice of the Supreme Court in which he served a few years, later retiring to his home in Belleville.

Here he occupied himself in literary work becoming the author of *History of Belleville, My Own Times, Pioneer History of Illinois*, and *Sketches of the Country on the North Route from Belleville, Illinois*.

His home still stands at 110 North Illinois Street, just south of the Renner-Geminn Funeral Home. It is of comfortable proportion, a two story brick of sturdy and enduring construction. This residence has defied time, and recently it was marked with a copper memorial tablet which bears the following inscription: "John Reynolds, Governor of Illinois, 1830 to 1834, resided here." J. Nick Perrin, a local historian, was given the honor of placing the tablet there.

Joseph Scott, another early American settler, came here at the age of seventeen from Virginia. He helped to build the home of George Blair, on the present site of the Elks Club. In 1811 he and a companion went into the wilderness of Missouri looking for saltpeter then used in making gun powder. This trip took all winter but they came back with 400 pounds



of saltpeter. He then built a gun-powder mill on his farm, which supplied enough for all his neighbors. His powder gained a wide reputation for it was said to be powerful enough to kill the devil.

William H. Bissell, of whom this community is proud, was born near Cooperstown, New York, on April 25, 1811. His parents were poor, but he managed to attend the public schools, later to graduate from the Philadelphia Medical College in 1835 and the Transylvania University at Lexington, Kentucky, in 1844. He moved to Illinois in 1836 and began the practice of medicine in Monroe County.

In appearance he was of average height, finely proportioned, and bore himself with becoming dignity. He was frank, open, and prepossessing, with dark and overhanging eyebrows. In manner he was exceedingly courteous, and his conversations were animated and interesting. He was a kind and affectionate husband and father, a splendid citizen, a staunch friend, and a devoted and sincere believer in immortality.

He volunteered in the Mexican War as a private and joined Company G, of the 2nd Regiment. By June, 1846 he had attained the rank of Colonel and as such won distinction in the battle of Buena Vista.

He was elected to Congress in 1850 and served three terms. While there he was challenged to a duel by Jefferson Davis after a heated exchange of words respecting the relative courage of the northern and southern soldiers in the Mexican War. Mr. Davis' friends however, objected to the duel and it never occurred. With the expiration of his third congressional term he had hoped to retire from politics, but the Republican State Convention at Bloomington in 1856 selected him to head their ticket as Governor of Illinois. Heretofore he had been a Democrat, but he consented to run as a Republican and led the state ticket to victory, giving a Bellevillian the honor of being the first Republican Governor of Illinois. He defeated

his Democratic opponent, Richardson, by 5,000 votes, but he was unfortunate to have had a Democratic legislature. Being partially paralyzed in his lower limbs, his inauguration as governor took place in the Executive Mansion on January 12, 1857, attended only by his immediate family and a few friends. Ten months before his term ended, he contracted a cold which later developed into pneumonia. This caused his death on March 18, 1860, in his 49th year.

Mrs. Elizabeth Bissell, his widow, continued to reside in Springfield until 1863. In that year she moved back to Belleville and died here in 1865. She was buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery, in Springfield, by the side of her husband.

On June 21, 1917, the Belleville Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution placed a bronze tablet in the main building of the Belleville Township High School commemorating the three Governors, Edwards, Reynolds, and Bissell, and the two Lieutenant-Governors, Kinney and Koerner, who had been local residents and who had contributed so much, not only to the state, but to the nation as well.

Two other men worthy of mention are Colonel Phillip B. Fouke and Colonel James L. D. Morrison, better known as Don Morrison. The first one became United States Congressman succeeding Bissell, while the latter, a rival of Bissell, sacrificed his political future by refusing to repudiate slavery. He was nevertheless a good soldier, an able lawyer, and a magnetic speaker.

Lyman Trumbull too, has his place in our history. He was born at Colchester, Connecticut, on October 12, 1813, but moved to Georgia, where he became a school teacher and where he learned to hate slavery. He decided to move north, which he did in 1837, riding horseback all the way. He and Governor Reynolds formed a law partnership. Although a successful debater, he was never recognized as an outstanding orator. He was an untiring worker, and possessed the ability

to concentrate, but did not find pleasure in social life, remaining rather aloof in manner.

His ability was never questioned, and he grew in statesman-like stature as time went on.

Entering politics in 1840, he was elected as a representative to our General Assembly. In 1841 he was named Secretary of State and served as such until 1843. From 1848 to 1853 he served as a Justice of the State Supreme Court, and in 1855 entered the race for the United States Senate. Senator Shield's term was about to expire and it was believed that he could not be re-elected for he had voted in favor of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. Trumbull, his opponent, won because the anti-Nebraska Democrats and Whigs joined to elect him. He served as our Senator for a period of eighteen years, 1855 to 1873, and was regarded as one of the ablest statesmen during the Civil War and Reconstruction Period. He served also on the Senate Judiciary Committee where he was perhaps more influential in shaping legislation on war and reconstruction than any other Senator. In 1864 he introduced a resolution into Congress that later became the 13th amendment to the United States Constitution, which abolished the last remaining remnant of slavery throughout the United States.

In 1872 he was proposed for the Liberal Republican nomination for President. However, when this failed he completed his term in the United States Senate, after which he moved to Chicago and again practiced law and remained active in that profession until his death on June 25, 1896. Unpretentious and scholarly, he was one of our outstanding lawyers and statesmen, failing to reach greater political heights only because he lacked popular appeal. His home in Belleville was on South High Street.

Nathaniel Niles, who came to Belleville in 1842, was born in Oswego County, New York, February 4, 1877. He soon distinguished himself as an editor, lawyer, and military leader.

He was one of the founders of the Republican party in Southern Illinois and was editor of the Daily Advocate from 1851 to 1857.

He enlisted in the Mexican War, 1846, fought in the battle of Buena Vista under General Taylor, and rose to the rank of Captain. Again in the Civil War he fought under Grant at Vicksburg and later represented our county at Springfield. He died on September 16, 1900, and was buried in Walnut Hill Cemetery. His friend of long standing, Jehu Baker, delivered his funeral oration.

Two brothers who became well-known here were William H. and Joseph B. Underwood. Both were very able lawyers, but William gained greater prominence. William was born in Schoharie County, New York, February 21, 1818. His ambitions urged him to go West where opportunities then seemed greater. In 1841 he was elected District Attorney and was re-elected in 1843. In 1848 he was elected Judge of the Circuit Court and in 1856 became State Senator to which office he was re-elected in 1860 and again in 1870. While in the Illinois Senate he was one of its most industrious members never missing a single day's session, never missing a committee meeting, and holding a holy terror for special legislation, always working hard to defeat it. In 1870 he was also elected a delegate to our state constitutional convention and later was the author of *Underwood's Annotated Statutes of Illinois*, in two volumes. He was an able debater, possessing fine literary talents. He was well informed in political economy and was regarded as a most estimable gentleman. He died on September 23, 1875, at his residence on Abend street.

Two men who are sometimes referred to as "The Two Fathers of our City," were Mr. James Mitchell and Mr. John Dennis. In 1821 Mr. Mitchell was appointed Justice of the Peace and was our Postmaster for many years. Mr. Dennis taught school for forty years, teaching nearly all the youth of his day. In

1862 he became the School Commissioner for St. Clair County and installed new life, vigor, and efficiency in the whole public school system.

James P. Slade was born in 1832 and became one of our leading educators. In 1863 he was elected principal of Belleville High School located in the Odd Fellows Building, now the Lincoln Hotel. He was our eleventh County Superintendent and served in that capacity for three terms. In 1869 he was elected vice-president of our State Teachers' Association and in the same year he was appointed a Trustee to our State University. In 1873 he was made a member of the Shurtleff College Board of Examiners. In 1876 he was elected Treasurer of our State Teachers' Association and also State Superintendent of Public Instruction. He was re-elected to the latter office in 1880 and in 1883 was appointed President of Almira College in Granville, Ill., which position he filled as soon as his second term expired. He served in this capacity until 1890 when he was appointed Superintendent of the Public Schools of East St. Louis. He died in that city in 1908 at the age of 76 years.

John B. Hay, born January 8, 1834, was a native-born Bellevillian. His boyhood home stood where our City Hall now stands. His father was a storekeeper, and not being very prosperous, the children had to earn their own living as much as possible.

His career started in a printing office, where he learned the printing trade and studied law at the same time. In 1851 he was admitted to the bar. After editing the St. Clair Tribune for six months he gave it up for it proved unprofitable. He married Maria Hinckley of Belleville on October 16, 1857.

He had received a liberal education and was quite a classical scholar. His penmanship was perfect and because of it, he was employed wherever good penmanship was a requisite. He soon became the undisputed writer of wills and contracts, and it was characteristic that nearly all of these were identical,



because as it was said, "If you are honest, a will can be written only one way." His honesty was such that never a finger of suspicion was pointed at him. He walked through life with his head erect and looked every man squarely in the eye. He was always courteous and polite and conducted himself with the grace and dignity that is so often an accomplishment of the men of the South.

In 1860 he was a delegate to the Republican State Convention at Decatur, where he helped declare Illinois for Lincoln as president. He had been elected State's Attorney in 1856, an office to which he was re-elected in 1864. In 1870 he was elected to Congress, but was defeated in 1872 and in 1880 by small majorities. In 1881 he was appointed Postmaster of Belleville by President Garfield. In 1886 he was elected County Judge, and in 1901 was honored by being elected Mayor of Belleville. In 1902 and 1906 he was again elected County Judge.

He died at the home of his son in Chicago, on June 29, 1916. His body was sent here for burial. Services were held on July 2 at the Court House where his life-long friend Cyrus Thompson delivered the eulogy after which his body was laid to rest in Green Mount Cemetery.

Another man worthy of mention is Colonel John Thomas. He was at various times Colonel of the first state militia of Illinois, Colonel of a regiment in the Black Hawk War, a State Representative, and later a State Senator. He was the grandfather of our present State Senator John Thomas, and was at one time regared as the wealthiest land owner in St. Clair County.

James Shields was born in Ireland May 12, 1806. In 1822 he sailed from Liverpool for Quebec but was shipwrecked off the coast of Scotland. Here he earned money as a tutor and again started out in 1826, this time making the journey safely. From Quebec he migrated southward finally settling at Kaskaskia, from whence he moved to Belleville, where he practiced



law, entered politics, and became a soldier in the Black Hawk, Mexican, and Civil Wars. In political life he accomplished the seemingly impossible for he represented at one time or another, three states, Illinois Minnesota, and Missouri, in the United States Senate. While in Illinois he was a member of the General Assembly, was State Auditor, Justice of the Supreme Court, Land Commissioner, and United States Senator in 1849.

Shields later moved to Minnesota where he encouraged the settling of the Irish in St. Paul. When Minnesota became a state in 1859 Shields was elected one of its United States Senators.

After the Civil War, 1866, he moved to Missouri and served out an unexpired term as United States Senator, January 27, 1879 to March 3, 1879, but ill health forced him to retire from politics. His death occurred June 1, 1879, and he was buried at Carrolton, Mo. All three states have since honored him with a statue or memorial.

Jehu Baker was born November 4, 1822, the son of William and Margaret Baker, who came to this country when Jehu was only seven years old. They settled on a farm near Lebanon where Jehu attended the public schools and McKendree College. Upon graduating he moved to Belleville where he became a noted linguist, for he could translate French, German, Spanish, and Italian with ease. His English edition of Montesque's *Grandeur and Decadence of the Romans* is regarded as an authoritative work. He was admitted to the bar in 1846, was Master in Chancery of St. Clair County, 1861 to 1865, was elected to Congress as a Republican in 1864, and served as United States Minister to Venezuela from 1876 to 1885. He was returned to Congress again in 1886 and 1896. He died on March 1, 1903, at his home, 218 South High, at the age of 81 and was buried in Green Mount Cemetery.

Other early American settlers were J. S. Perryman, E. W.

Primm, D. Rentchler, J. T. Ward, W. C. Buchanan, Thomas Harrison, J. M. Hay, Charles Gooding, James H. and Felix Scott, Joseph Griffen, John Hinchcliffe (who wrote a history of Belleville), J. W. Hughes, Peter Dunn, Adam, Elijah, and H. S. Badgley, and W. J. Wilderman.

### NOTED GERMAN IMMIGRANTS

The German immigration to St. Clair County began in 1826 when two German families settled here, and by 1830 these were followed by the first great influx of German immigrants. Before this time the French and English languages were predominant, but with the coming of the Germans came a change in speech. It was this German element that perhaps has contributed most to the material and cultural growth of our community.

Germany was at that time in a state of political unrest, which culminated in the Revolution of 1830 and its later oppression. The revolutionists lost and had to flee their country and that brought to our country some of the most liberal and best thinking Germans. For the most part they were students. They came here because they were attracted by the liberal policy of our young republic. Then too, they found inviting homes on the virgin soil of our midwestern prairies, although their former habits and education fitted them more for polished city life than for the toils and struggle of the frontier.

Among them were lawyers, public officials, school teachers, clergymen, merchants, and wealthy farmers. Many had been forced to flee for their lives and all were disgusted with the reactionary forces that had been turned loose upon them in their homeland.

The naturalization list of our county from 1836 to 1844 was overwhelmingly German. Among them were such names as Koerner, Hilgard, Eckert, Scheel, Abend, Engelmann, Raab, Bunsen, Bornman, Busse, Obermueller, Ackerman, Knobloch, Mueller, Ensminger, Mohr, Heimbürger, Joseph, Scheel, Knab,

Daab, Rentchler and many others.

Well can we marvel at the courage of the immigrant who came from Europe when we consider what an ordeal an ocean voyage was in those days. Delays on the ocean for the sail boats were countless due to the shifting winds, duties on baggage were heavy, and there seemed to have been little or no respect for personal comfort and hygienic conditions on the ship. Many persons became very ill due to the small size of the ship and its crowded condition, which made ocean travel most unpleasant. Many adults died from, and small children seldom survived, the hardships of such a voyage.

The voyage from Rotterdam to Philadelphia cost \$80 per person. Those who could not pay for their trip practically sold themselves into slavery for they could not leave the ship until bought by some purchaser and the money turned over to the captain of the ship.

It took some of them years to regain their freedom. Adults served for three or four years; children, between the ages of ten to fifteen, served until they were twenty-one. Many parents had to sell their children to pay their passage. In this way many families were separated and scattered in their new found country.

Belleville, by the year 1855, had a population of over 6,000 and began to look like a typical German village with its German signs and its German beer gardens. Many homes were furnished with furniture brought from Germany and the method of living was still like that in the home country.

The German pioneers had not intended to perpetuate Germanism on American soil in the false hope that some one state or many communities in a state would become a German oasis, or even a new Germany. The grouping together of so many similar elements with such a small admixture of America naturally tended to continue the use of the German language and of German culture.

The Germans loved their new home and the liberty that it offered them. This was shown by their participation in the celebration of the Fourth of July in 1843. They were the first to erect a liberty pole on the Public Square and it was the tallest ever put up, so tall that it had to be spliced in two places and stood well over 100 feet in height.

The industrious Germans have also been noted for their "gemnutlichkeit." The Belleville Public Library is an outgrowth of the German Library Society formed in 1836. The "Saengerbund," another cultural society, was organized here in 1853 as was also the "Liebhaber Theatre Group." Later there were other musical groups, the Liederkrantz and the Kronthal-Liedertafel.

The German immigrants were patriotic and liberty-loving and had their first chance to prove it during the Civil War. Most of the Germans in our city were passionately on the side of Lincoln and many volunteered and served their country throughout the war. On the whole, the Germans prospered, many becoming more than just well-to-do. There was a well known saying at that time which was, "He who comes to America poor becomes rich; who comes to America rich becomes poor." The poor knew how to save and make every dollar count and they were often more successful in business.

Although our city had been predominately German since 1830 it has in recent years become more cosmopolitan in character. The census of 1930 showed that only 58% of our people were of German extraction and that many other nationalities had been added to our population. It is a fact, however, that until the turn of the present century more German was spoken here than any other language and there were still pastors preaching in the German language. It was the first World War, 1914-1918, that brought about the final change. It was the German element, perhaps more than any others, that gave our city its sound, conservative business and civic practices. These have always been sufficiently developed to meet the normal demands, but

never to the extent of luring speculation. As a whole, our people are honest, industrious, and thrifty. Not many have accumulated vast fortunes but most of our people have always owned their own homes and through the practice of thrift have guaranteed themselves independence during old age. Such characteristics as these have made our city stable and assured us a normal steady growth.

George Bunsen, an outstanding educator, was born in Frankfort, Germany, February 18, 1794. He attended the schools of that city, entered the University of Berlin in 1812, and was in the German Army that helped defeat Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815. He continued his studies under Father Pestalozzi in Switzerland and then opened a boys' school in Frankfort and many a person of that city owed to him the foundation of their culture.

When the Revolution of 1833 broke out he again took a part in the war, but happened to be on the losing side. He hurriedly sold all of his property including his school which was bought by a man named Stellwagen and his home was turned into a hospital for cholera sufferers. He then joined the Geissener Immigration Association as a teacher of the children. For pay, he was to receive transportation for himself and his family to America and 160 acres of land in the new world. The association landed at New Orleans on June 3, 1834. A disagreement with the association caused Mr. Bunsen to break his contract with them. He paid for his transportation and immediately came to St. Louis by boat. His friends soon advised him how he could obtain rich land near Shiloh from the government and he was soon the proud owner of a 360-acre farm near our city.

For a cultured man to be obliged to till the soil would have been a very hard task for many men, but not for Mr. Bunsen. It was said that he went about his work with an earnestness that would have been a credit to any of his neighbors who had been tilling the soil for many years.



He married Sophie Le Coq who was a descendant of the famous German engraver Chodowiecki. To this union was born nine children, six sons and three daughters. In 1847 he was elected a member of the State Constitutional Convention which drew up the constitution that was adopted by the state of Illinois, on March 6, 1848. From 1855-1859 he served as County Superintendent of Schools. In 1856 Governor Mattison appointed him a member of the State Board of Education whose duty it was to establish the first normal school in the state which later became Normal University, Bloomington, Illinois. In 1857 he moved to Belleville where he opened a model school and began propounding to the young Americans the principle of the great educator Pestalozzi. In 1859 to 1872 he was a director on the city Board of Education, remaining a member of that until his death on October 3, 1872, at the age of 78. When he died all teachers and students showed their love and respect by dismissing school and attending his funeral. The newspaper accounts telling of his death were all headed "Father Bunsen." This alone shows the esteem in which he was held by the citizens of our city. No further eulogy need be given except to say that he was a devout Christian, a great teacher, and a lovable character. He was buried behind the Chapel in Walnut Hill Cemetery.

Another prominent immigrant, Henry Raab, was born in the city of Wetzler, Germany, June 20, 1837, educated in his native city, came to America, and settled in our city in 1854. He received work as a night clerk in a distillery on West Main, became interested in education, and entered the teaching profession. He married Miss Matilda Von Lengerke, a native of Hanover, Germany, in 1859. To this union were born five children.

After retiring, he spent his last years in writing on educational subjects. He wrote a history of the local schools and will be long remembered for his work as an educator here and throughout the state of Illinois. He had been connected with



the local education system for thirty-six years and was State Superintendent of Schools in 1883-87 and again in 1891-95.

Jacob Brosius was born in Cronberg, Germany, February 27, 1824, and came to America in 1849. He had been well educated in mathematics and mechanics, and as soon as he arrived in our city he was determined to engage in farming. He soon formed a partnership with Jacob Geist and began operating a foundry for the manufacture of agricultural implements and soon began to prosper. When the new Court House was built he received the contract to furnish all the iron work which included the old iron stairs and the threshold of the doors. These are still in the old part of the County Capital today.

In 1876 he built a palatial home at 735 East Main Street, known as the Cron-thal, and was the first to live in it. It is remembered today as the homestead of the late Frank N. Perrin. Brosius also built next to it, at 763 East Main, the first power plant in this city. He had two ponds which extended to where the Douglas School is now located and these supplied the water for the steam engine which furnished the necessary power. At the peak of the Cron-thal, which was built on the plan of the castle at Cronberg, Germany, from which place Bronsius emigrated, was erected a search-light, which illuminated the Public Square of that day in the '80's. Later he furnished light for that part of the city east of the square by means of a carbon lamp which type of lamp continued to light the streets of our city until about 1910.

In 1879 he became interested in a central heating plant and in the winter of 1880-1881 his plant furnished steam to fifty-five places in Belleville.

In 1886 Brosius started an oil refining plant on what is now Mascoutah Avenue, near East Main Street, and is at present occupied by the repair department of the Herman G. Wangelin garage. The entire plant and machinery were built under his direction and were declared at the time to have been most

modern in construction. Here he invented a clear cold-pressed castor oil, a product pressed from castor beans by machinery which for a time he kept a secret.

The process was soon discovered, however, and came into general use throughout the country. He died on July 1, 1882, at the age of 58 and was buried in Walnut Hill Cemetery.

There was a great stir in the little town of Zweibrucken in 1830, when it became known that Theodore Hilgard, a justice of the Court of Appeals in that little city, had decided to abandon his assured legal career to emigrate to the United States. He was forty years of age and had a wife and nine children. What was even more striking was that his decision was due simply and solely to an intellectual conviction that life in as reactionary a country as Germany was so stifling as to be unbearable. He was in addition a confirmed Democrat and believer in Republican institutions with an ardor hardly in keeping with a judicial career.

It actually took him five years to make the break with a life marked by such honorable circumstances. His leave-taking was made harder by a farewell banquet given him by his city. His sound knowledge, his courage and ability in public relations, his fine stand as a civil leader, his high ethical standards, as an inscription at the banquet read, will be his passport and his security in every hemisphere. The "Landrath" in Zweibrucken, that is the provincial assembly, recorded on the judge's resignation that his loss was almost irreplaceable and spoke of his model character and numerous talents.

There being no railroads this large family embarked in two wagons, with one man servant, for Havre, France, which they reached safely in the short period of eight days. They sailed on October 22, 1835, for New Orleans, a voyage of no less than sixty-three days in an American ship which duly transferred them to a little Mississippi River steamer. When they reached St. Louis, then a city of 10,000 people, they had been more

than three and one half months on the way from Germany. They at once crossed the Mississippi to settle in Belleville, where they joined those who had made this community famous because of the high attainments and standing of so many of its members. He bought a two hundred-acre farm between Belleville and East St. Louis just west of Richland Creek and here joined a group known as the Latin Peasants but who were really neither Latin or Peasants, but a group of intellectuals who had attended German universities and knew Latin and Greek. Among them were doctors, lawyers, judges, teachers, businessmen, and noblemen. Of these, the noblemen proved to be the least efficient and successful of the whole colony because they were unaccustomed to hard labor and were imbued with so many social prejudices that they could not adjust themselves.

Our community was then a village of about five hundred people. Hilgard noticed that homes here were not as large nor as comfortable as those in Germany. Of this he complained to his friends, but added that everyone seemed to have at least one or more riding horses which more than made up for the lack of other conveniences.

Twenty feet from his home he had one acre fenced for his garden. The garden had beautiful shade trees which made it look like an English park. The garden was in front of the house, to the right an orchard, in the back a yard, and on the left could be seen the village of Belleville.

People soon asked to buy some of his land along the St. Louis Road for building purposes. He then laid off some of his land into lots of 50x100 and sold them for fifty dollars each. By 1858 he had sold 552 of them and they formed what was known as West Belleville.

On the morning of December 6, 1847, part of the brewery owned by Jacob Fleischbein burned. Firemen were able to save only the lower part of it but his loss was felt so keenly by

West Belleville that as soon as the fire had been put out someone proposed that they rebuild the plant so that the owner's business might not suffer. This the workers agreed to do and they did the work and the business men furnished the lumber, all without cost to the owner. In twenty-four hours the building was complete again and a collection taken to compensate the owner for his additional losses.

Friedrich Engelmann bought a farm five miles east of Belleville and there really lived a patriarchial life with his wife and eight children. Some had won a high position in the community which was due mostly to the fact that they faced the country with full and grateful hearts and had gladly accepted the very great difficulties and hardships with which they had at first to contend as a not unreasonable price to pay for freedom and the advantage of life in America.

Frederich Hecker was one of the German intellectual immigrants that succeeded as a farmer. He knew nothing about breaking in new land except that they chose the highlands which were not swampy and free from chills and fever.

In 1818 the first German mechanics arrived and at once began to make a living at their trade. Schmidt, Small, and Bornman were blacksmiths and their descendants still live here. Mr. Conrad Bornman, however, became the most successful of them. Like most of the German settlers, he could hardly speak any English. He soon gave up the blacksmith trade and learned to make and lay brick instead. He was honest, willing to learn, and a hard worker, and he soon became wealthy in his new vocations. He became widely known because of his irreproachable character. Bornman is believed to have been the first German to settle in this city.

In 1833, a German named Edward Abend, arrived here and in time became one of our most successful citizens. He was born in Marnheim, Germany, on May 30, 1822, and came to

America with his family ten years later.

Upon their arrival in St. Louis the Asiatic Cholera was raging and the father and two children died of that disease. The mother, with the remaining five children, then settled on a farm near Shiloh, Illinois, where they had friends. Here they remained several years before finally moving to Belleville.

Young Abend received his education in the subscription schools and at McKendree College. Upon graduating, he studied law in the offices of Lyman and George Trumbull and was admitted to the bar in 1842.

In 1849 he was elected to the state legislature and was selected as one of our country's representatives on the Democratic ticket.

He foresaw that there was a greater future for him in business than in politics, and he devoted himself, heart and soul, in various business enterprises.

He was instrumental in the building of the first toll road to St. Louis, which was later known as the St. Louis Turnpike. He was the first president of our street railway, also of the Belleville Water Company, which he helped organize in 1856 and the Belleville Savings Bank which he and others organized in 1860.

Because of his ability and faithfulness to duty, he enjoyed the confidence and respect of the people of this vicinity. They elected him mayor for three terms, an office he filled with credit to himself in 1851, 1857, and 1858. He died on June 17, 1904, and was buried on June 19 in Walnut Hill Cemetery.

Prior to 1877, the mayor's term of office was but for one year, necessitating an annual election. But in 1877 the Legislature amended the General Law, changing their tenure to two years. In those early days it was considered an honor to serve as mayor; however, it was anything but lucrative. In 1854 the salary of the mayor amounted to two hundred dollars annually.



In 1875 it was increased to six hundred dollars, but was reduced to five hundred in 1881. Since then it has increased until today it is \$4000, and the tenure is for four years.

Peter Wilding, who came to Belleville in 1839 from Imsbach, Rhenish Bavaria, Germany, where he was born on November 1, 1817, succeeded Edward Abend as mayor in 1859, and was re-elected again in 1860. He was commonly referred to as "Honest Peter Wilding." His second administration came at a time when political feelings were running high, and when the country was unhappily divided on the slavery question. Along with men like James W. Hughes, Governor Reynolds, J. L. D. Morrison, and a number of other prominent Bellevilleans, Peter Wilding was not only a Democrat, but throughout those turbulent days, he remained one. Like the others, he was a states' rights advocate and he was definitely opposed to the agitation against slavery in the North, and he did not hesitate to say so. Entertaining such convictions, and being exposed because of them he was forced by public opinion to resign as mayor, which he did in June, 1860, just three months after having won the election. Two sympathetic aldermen, Simon Eimer and John Bieser, resigned with him. However, after the Civil War had ended, and after its bitterness and hatreds had been forgotten, he was again thrice elected as mayor, 1871, 1875, and 1879. He guarded the city's finances as carefully as he did his own, usually entering office with the city saddled with debt, and leaving it with its books balanced or its debt greatly reduced.

After a lingering illness he died on July 10, 1881, and was buried in Walnut Hill Cemetery, within a stone's throw of the graves of five other pioneer mayors, namely: Charles Palme, Edward Abend, Henry Kircher, Herman G. Weber, and Louis Bartel.

Other later German pioneers were William C. Kueffner, Dr. George Loelkes, Charles Merck, Joseph Leopold, William



Althoff, Col. Casimier Andel, Julius Bischoff, Martin Braunersreuther, father of Commadore William Braunersreuther, Frederick Kempff, father of Rear Admiral Louis Kempff, Joseph Gruenwald, Bernard Hartman, August C. Hucke, George Herr, Henry A. Kircher, Henry Kuhn, Adam Karr, Sr., August Lentz, John Maus, Henry Reis, Michael Reis, Frank Renner, Dr. Ferdinand Rubach, Dr. Louis Starkel, Sr., Herman G. Weber, William Winkelmann, George L. Neuhoff, Herman and Henry Knoebel, Theodore Dauth, A. G. Fleischbein, Fred E. Scheel, Solomon Mueller, O. F. Schoot, William Friedlander, and Louis and Philip Huff.

## CHAPTER VI

# The Growth of Our City

(TRANSPORTATION)

**I**n the old days, traveling was done in hacks or carriages, usually pulled by four horses. The roads were very poor, especially in the spring and fall at which time of the year they seemed to be bottomless. A traditional story tells of a man, who traveling from Belleville to St. Louis on horseback, and upon reaching that part of the road below the Bluffs, saw a man's hat on the ground in the middle of the road. Stopping his horse, he got off to pick it up, only to discover there was a live man's head under it, who at once informed him that he was still quite all right, but that beneath him was a wagon and two horses and they were in a bad fix.

The fourteen mile trip to St. Louis, especially that part of the journey below the Bluffs was a trying undertaking. In 1844 the people, greatly disturbed about it, held a mass meeting at the Court House. Here a traffic survey made by Mr. Enoch Lucky was presented in which he reported that every day 175 to 200 teams went from Belleville to St. Louis and that 300 teams crossed by ferry to St. Louis daily.

The first ferry to operate across the Mississippi was built by Captain James Piggot in the year 1797. It was a simple railed-in platform supported on log canoes and propelled by slaves by means of poles and long sweeps.

The famed Wiggins Ferry Company was organized in 1818.

By 1828 the ferries operated faster and the service was much improved, because now they were steam propelled, but nevertheless the service depended much on the whims of the river and the weather. Western mail was often delayed for days in Illinois, due to the antics of the Mississippi, which cut us off from its western shore. Also, in winter when the river was frozen, or partly frozen, or jammed with ice, or sometimes beset with tiny icebergs, the ferry could not run. Then again steam boats paddled their way from St. Louis to the foot of our Bluffs at Edgemon during the flood of 1844. In the winter of 1856 the river at St. Louis was so completely frozen over with sufficiently thick ice that the heaviest teams could travel as on a macadamized road.

John Reynolds owned a large tract of land below the Bluffs, in the vicinity of Edgemon, only six miles from St. Louis. This land was underlaid with coal, and Governor Reynolds, shrewd businessman that he was, knew this, so the Old Ranger, as he was often called, couldn't rest until he found a way of transporting his hidden wealth to the market. He, therefore, decided on building a railroad to the Mississippi River.

This railroad, the first to be built in the Mississippi Valley, was operated by means of horse power. It had wooden rails with straps of iron over the top. The road bed was graded, a lake was bridged, and within one season, 1837, this line was delivering coal to East St. Louis, then known as Illinois Town.

The track was improved later when iron rails were brought by boat, via the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. On their arrival, holes were punched into them by the blacksmiths of this neighborhood, who also made the spikes with which to nail them on the wooden ties. This greatly improved the services and more freight and passengers were carried every year. In 1862 an average of three hundred passengers per day traveled the road. In 1859 it carried 182,184 barrels of flour; in 1862, 65 car loads of coal daily; and in 1869, 305,358 tons of coal

and 344,151 tons of other freight.

The second railroad established here was the Belleville and Southern Illinois Railroad. Old-timers knew it as the St. Louis, Alton and Terre Haute system, but later it was known as the Cairo Short Line. Today it is part of the Illinois Central Railroad System.

Since early transportation was so dependent on the roads, and with so many people living in the outlying communities, it became necessary to find ways and means of improving these roads. This resulted in the building of the first plank road in 1852. Farmers could now come to town in an hour or two drawing full loads, while formerly they encountered much difficulty even to get here with an empty wagon. Better roads greatly increased business and people began to realize that the most valuable business investment for the community was an expenditure for better roads.

With greatly improved transportation facilities, business in Belleville increased to such an extent that there followed a demand for passenger service to and from St. Louis. In 1848 stage coach service to St. Louis went into effect. It left right after breakfast, from Mr. Winter's Hotel, now called the Belleville House, and left St. Louis at 2 p. m. from Mr. Finch's City Lunch or, if ordered in time, from any other place in that city.

This new line soon became so prosperous that competing lines were established and rate wars began to be the favorite sport of the drivers. A new firm in 1852 cut the single fare to twenty-five cents upon where the old line angrily cut its fare to ten cents. In 1854 both reduced it to five cents. Improvements in the service were also made, one company even going so far as to substitute horses for mules, and heavy coaches for lighter ones, and making the round trip in three hours instead of taking all day.

The first express service to St. Louis began in 1854 when

Jacob Fouke started daily afternoon passenger and express service, returning the same day.

The increased demand for over-land transportation now led to a general improvement of roads. The macadamized system of road building, named after McAdam, its inventor, was nothing more than crushed rock held together with various binding compounds, usually tar. It proved to be the better type road. The first of its kind ever to be built in Illinois extended from Belleville to St. Louis, a distance of fourteen miles. Before then it was almost impossible to have produce delivered to the market with any regularity from early fall to spring. The first rock road constituted a portion of our present highway 15 and was a section of the old Cahokia-Vincennes Post Road. It was the road travelled by the early settlers from St. Louis and the American Bottoms to Belleville.

In 1847 the state legislature approved the building of this road to St. Louis, issued a charter to the St. Clair County Turnpike Company, which was to construct the road and to call it the Rock Road. Work on it began in March, 1849, and in the year 1850 the stretch from the river to the Bluffs was graded and covered with rock. February, 1852, saw its completion to High Street in our city, at a total cost of \$128,000. To cover its cost, toll gates were established and no one seemed to object. From the standpoint of business it practically placed our city on the banks of the Mississippi, making it a suburb of St. Louis. Residents hurriedly built along the road until now the two cities, East St. Louis and Belleville, have joined each other at the foot of the bluffs.

On June 12, 1902, the Belleville Turnpike, later known as the Belleville and East St. Louis Rock Road, was condemned in the city limits and its toll gates were ordered removed. Under state law, tolls could only be collected outside the limits of incorporated cities. The abolition of toll collection in the city was hailed with joy by the people. The toll rates had been as

follows: bicycle, five cents; one-horse vehicle, twenty cents; two-horse vehicle, thirty cents. As the two cities expanded the toll limits continually shortened until by 1907 Edgemont was incorporated and the Turnpike began dying a rapid death. On December 10, 1910, the end came, for on that day the state ordered the Turnpike to vacate the Rock Road.

The power of tradition is shown in the continued use of the name, Rock Road. On October 18, 1906, the city council changed the official name to West Main Street, but that seemed to make no difference to the people. They insisted that since 1850 it was the Rock Road and such it will always be to many.

No bridge spanned the Mississippi River, at St. Louis, although traffic on both sides of it had become so heavy that one was badly needed. The Eads Bridge, the first vehicular and railroad bridge to span the river, was begun in 1869 and it was believed that it would multiply many times the advantages already found in our community. Agricultural producers would be much closer to the markets of the West, and Belleville would therefore be an adjunct to and a partner in the successful growth of the Empire City of the Mississippi Valley. Gustav Koerner was appointed as one of the attorney's for the bridge company to handle the land claims on this side of the river. The claims paid by the company amounted to several hundred thousand dollars and besides the claims, many legal questions had to be settled. The bridge was dedicated with fitting ceremonies on July 4, 1874, with President Grant the principal speaker.

The first railroad to enter the heart of Belleville was the Louisville and Nashville, when its first train steamed into the city in 1870. In that year also a road seven miles in length was built from Belleville to O'Fallon. Other railroads soon followed and today three main trunk lines pass through our city.

When the first horse-drawn street car was introduced in July,



1874, it was considered a major event and was celebrated with considerable ado. On the first day of its operation five bob-tail coaches were placed on the tracks at about 6 p.m. and free rides between East Belleville and West Belleville were given to everybody. The entire length of Main Street was gaily decorated on that auspicious occasion. Thousands of people gathered to witness the grand sight, for many of the younger ones had never seen, much less heard of, a street car. So eager was everyone to take a ride that a grand rush resulted, bringing with it many aching and sore feet, and much exhausted horse flesh.

The Belleville City Railway, as the horse-car system was known, didn't prosper financially, and eventually, in 1876, it discontinued business, leaving the city without any service whatever. In 1884 another attempt at re-establishing it was made, with the result that it was again revived. By 1888 it had five tracks, costing \$32,000, nine cars (five in daily use), twenty-six horses, and employed fifteen men. H. A. Alexander was its manager.

By late 1892 the old horse-drawn car was beginning to pass from the picture. On August 21, 1893, the first permit for electric railway service was granted by the city council to the General Electric Company, giving them the right to lay tracks on Main Street from the western city limits, then known as Cleveland Avenue, to Douglas Avenue on East Main Street, and also on some other streets. Free rides were given on the opening day to all, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with regular scheduled service beginning the next day.

With all of the increased traffic, the old wooden bridge across the Richland Creek, on West Main Street, was doomed. It once marked the border line between Belleville and West Belleville, and it was the scene of many fights between rival factions in these communities. But it had seen its day and in 1896 it was replaced by the first concrete bridge in the city.

This was, of course, a radical departure from the usual type of construction, and some of the local "know-it-alls" were quite sure it wouldn't work. They were positive that as soon as the wooden forms were removed the concrete couldn't stand by itself. The bridge was designed by J. B. Strauss and when he removed the wooden forms the people were surprised that it stood by itself. It continued to do so until 1937 when it was torn out and the present one built. Mr. Strauss later supervised the building of the famous Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco.

After being in operation a number of years, the General Electric Company sold its interests to John A. Day. Thereafter it was commonly known as the Day Line. Its first through car ran over the system on May 27, 1899.

At that time the city limits of Belleville extended two miles in an east-west direction. East St. Louis and Belleville were still separated by a distance of 140 blocks and each city maintained its own railway system and both kept the Suburban Railway Company out of their respective cities. Pleasure trips on the early street cars, especially in the summer when open cars were used, were a regular Sunday afternoon or evening recreation and many trolley parties were given by individuals.

John Day also owned two suburban lines in addition to the city line. On November 15, 1897, he organized a third company, the St. Louis and Belleville Interurban Railway Company, and began operating a line to East St. Louis in the summer of 1898. He had hoped to buy the old St. Clair County Turnpike, which was not in a strong financial condition at that time. However, the owners asked such an exorbitant price that he proceeded instead to buy a right-of-way south of the turnpike, where he built the Day Line. Before this was completed, Townsend and Reed, two Chicago promoters, arrived here and obtained the right-of-way of the turnpike between the two cities and began working on the Suburban Railway Line which, when completed, ran on 40-minute schedules, but Day had the advantage

in that he could issue transfers on his two lines.

These two rival companies operated between Belleville and East St. Louis until February, 1902, when a merger was effected between the East St. Louis, Belleville and Suburban Company. The new company became known as The East St. Louis and Suburban Railway Company. Clark Brothers of Philadelphia were its owners.

George L. Phillips, a grocer of 5800 West Main, drove the first interurban electric car that entered our city, on June 14, 1898. He was also a passenger on the last trolley to enter and leave our city on July 24, 1932, for it was on that day that the street cars were replaced by our modern bus service. Mr. Phillips had been a motorman on the old green cars for nine years and for purely sentimental reasons he arose at 3:00 a.m. for the last street car ride. He drove his automobile to Edgemont station, boarded the last car to come from St. Louis to Belleville, rode it back to Edgemont, and then got into his car again to drive back home and finish his night's sleep.

The coming of the horseless carriage, or motor buggy, as it was often called, created excitement more than any event our city had experienced since the Civil War. Some of the people were fearsome of the grandfather of the modern automobile and some regarded the new-fangled contraption as a product of the devil, that would wreck the world. When they saw one coming along the street they shouted, "Look, here comes a motor buggy," which is just the reverse of today, for now when a horse appears on a street, they say, "look, here comes a horse." The automobile was here to stay and the old storm buggy, spring wagons, and horses began slowly to disappear.

On September 21, 1899, Mr. A. Lambrecht and wife of St. Louis, visited our city in their automobile. The trip required one hour and was the first vehicle of its kind to make its appearance on our streets.

Purchasers of automobiles in that day always got a thorough

book of instructions with it. It told about the care, feeding, and operation of the buggy. Here is an example of the details it contained: When the motor develops a sudden knock on the road it is perhaps due to a burned-out bearing. The thing to do, is to stop the car at once and whittle a temporary bearing out of wood allowing the owner to get back to town where repairs could be made.

Mr. Henry C. Deobald, local mechanic of 316 East Main Street, had the distinction at that time of being the only man in the world, who rode in an automobile built by himself. He had assembled every piece of machinery in this wonderful specimen of mechanical art, and in August, 1901, he traveled about our streets in a horseless carriage that was a product of his own mind and hands. It was considered a beautiful thing, for its panels were of maroon and scarlet, while the running gear was neatly striped black. It was six feet long, four feet high, and thirty inches wide, and was made entirely of metal. The body was made of sheet metal, lined with asbestos and coupled with pieces of angle iron which made it all the more substantial. The engine was beneath the seat and was of the steam type, always giving the driver a hot spot to sit on. It had two cylinders, was five horse-power, and the inventor contended that it would do fifty miles per hour. The water for the steam engine was heated by gasoline, while the gas tank had a capacity of five gallons and developed enough steam for a fifty-mile trip. The air tank was made of copper, and held forty pounds of pressure, which was used to force the gas from the tank to the generator where it supplied gas as fuel in making the steam. It took only four minutes to get enough steam to start the car.

Early speed laws differed greatly from those of today. The city tax records of 1904 shows that we had four automobiles in our city. The city, therefore, passed a speed law allowing them to travel only ten miles per hour in business districts and fifteen miles per hour in residential districts.

It was in 1909 that a local dairy with deserving pride, announced that it had bought the first auto delivery wagon in the city. Dealers in automobiles were slowly becoming more numerous and more varied. Even Sears, Roebuck sold them from 1896 to 1908, and their price was usually \$1,000 without accessories. The electric automobile was the one preferred by the rich and the price range of these was anywhere from two to three thousand dollars.

By 1915 the city council began regulating the cars due to their ever-growing numbers. A city ordinance was passed fixing the power of headlights so that they would not throw a beam of light more than thirty feet. In 1916 all cars were required by a city law to have red tail lights and in 1917, in order to avoid confusion, the city council insisted that all cars must keep to the right on the Public Square. On May 1, 1914, the city required every car owner to possess a city license, the cost, from four to ten dollars, depending on the horse-power of the car. In 1942 Belleville people owned 5459 pleasure cars and 655 trucks.

With the coming of the automobile came the demand for the paving of the Rock Road, and the greater the number of automobiles, the greater became the demand. The city ordinance providing for the paving of the Rock Road with concrete from the Southern crossing to Edgemont, a distance of five miles, was passed on January 5, 1915. It provided that the car tracks of the East St. Louis and Suburban Railroad be moved to the center of the roadway and that the company pave the center for a width of twenty-one feet with macadam and chat, flush with the street. It was estimated that the total cost of this improvement would be \$322,000.

On March 20, 1916, the actual work on that paving project began in Belleville, when Mayor R. E. Duvall, L. C. Harper of East St. Louis, and Phillip Reeb turned the first spadeful of earth. This undertaking had been a vital question in Belle-



ville for years and about 150 people attended the ceremony. Reverend C. R. Hempel, then pastor of the Christ Evangelical Church, invoked the divine blessing on the occasion.

On October 30, 1917, the Rock Road was completely paved with concrete and was regarded as having been the biggest single improvement ever undertaken by any Southern Illinois city up to that time. Because the material was concrete, the Portland Cement Association joined with the city in the dedication exercises. The cement association erected two concrete pillars at the western end of the roadway as suitable monuments to the undertaking. At 1:30 p.m. three bombs were sent up from the Square to mark the official opening of the dedication ceremonies. A parade was held, headed by Mayor Duvall. Addresses were made by the Mayor; S. E. Bradt, Superintendent of Highways of Illinois; Captain E. R. Kinsen, President of the Board of Public Service of St. Louis; Mayor Mollman of East St. Louis; and Benjamin Franklin Affleck formerly of Belleville, then an official of the Portland Cement Company of Chicago.

The advent of smooth concrete highways spelled the doom of the old plank road. Last of these to go was the Belleville-Smithton Road in 1917. Plank roads were always in need of repair, their tolls were a nuisance with the newer ways of travel, and their type was no longer satisfactory. In 1915, the Good Roads Booster Club was organized and the old plank roads were, one by one, thrown open to the public. First the fees were no longer collected and then the township assumed control. By 1919 our program of concrete highway construction was in full swing.

A daring professor, in gaily colored tights, was in all probability the first man ever to leave the solid ground of our city to soar towards the clouds above. This event took place at the old fairgrounds, where a balloon ascension thrilled the local citizenry and stirred their vivid imaginations to the day when



man would rule the air. The balloon used was rather primitive in construction, which was all the more reason for making the spectators' hearts tremble in suspense, until the daring aviator had made a safe landing, which he did by narrowly missing spearing himself on the pointed steeple of the Presbyterian Church on South High Street.

Presumably what was scheduled to be the first airplane flight here was that to take place in the summer of 1911, when it had been announced that Professor Joyce would make daily flights at the County Fair. The public was assured that the "human bird" was thoroughly familiar with the working and the operation of his plane, and that when the ship was not in flight, it would be on exhibition. For the small sum of ten cents, one could get a close view of it. It was heralded as one of the old type Curtiss biplanes with huge, monstrous landing wings and the aviator had to perch himself perilously in the open nose of the ship.

Having had their curiosity aroused through advanced announcement of its coming to the fair, ten thousand people gathered there the first day to see it and to watch the take-off. But they were sorely disappointed for the aviator did not make his appearance and the nearest thing to an airplane that they saw was a stretch of white canvass around a framework that was supposed to be an airplane. There was no motor nor pilot, and it cost a dime to see this contraption.

The first real airplane to reach the city limits of Belleville was flown by Professor Janis from St. Louis to Ogle Station in 1912. He had intended to fly to the Fair Grounds to attend the Retail Merchants Picnic on the Fourth of July, but on the first leg of his trip, which took him to Edgemont he was forced down because of a bad cylinder. He repaired it only to be forced down again at Ogle Station, when another cylinder went bad. Being unable to repair this one in time, he boarded the street car to the picnic. But now, at least, an airplane had

actually landed on Belleville soil.

Other means of transportation available here now are three railroad trunk lines, namely, the Illinois Central, Louisville and Nashville, and Southern Railroads. These have connections with 28 carriers that terminate in St. Louis and carry our products all over the world. There are five local freight, 15 local passenger, and 22 through freight trains on these three trunk lines daily. Besides these, air mail, air express, and air travel are also available to us due to our nearness to the St. Louis area.

On July 29, 1929, the new St. Louis-Belleville Highway 13 was opened for traffic. This shortened the distance between the two cities and it was estimated that the automobile owners would save \$122,750 a year using it. It is now being supplemented by a four-lane super-highway No. 460.

In 1926 busses were substituted for street cars by the East St. Louis and Suburban Railway and in 1932 the East St. Louis and Interurban Railway discontinued service between Belleville and St. Louis largely because of competition from the Purple Swan Coach and Blue Goose Motor Coach Companies. The Belleville-St. Louis Coach Company was organized and began operations on August 30, 1933, succeeding the East St. Louis and Suburban Railway Company and absorbed the coach companies. It began with eleven busses, while today it has a total of forty-three in service, and employs seventy-five employees of which all but ten are drivers. They began with four routes in the city and a St. Louis route. Today it has added one more route in the city and makes regular runs to Scott Field. Through affiliated companies it operates service to most nearby communities and to other lines passing through our city, thereby connecting us with all parts of the United States.

Its rates have been drastically reduced. The fare to St. Louis was 45 cents, but today is only 30 cents. The city fare was

a dime under the old company but it was cut to five cents by the new firm. The company is composed entirely of local men and they own nearly all of its \$120,000 capital stock. Besides buying new busses the company has purchased a terminal on the Public Square and a garage at Main and 4th Streets. J. L. Wellinghoff is its president, James W. Bedwell is vice-president, Earl Crocker secretary, and Arnold Breitweiser is the treasurer. It makes 90 round trips to St. Louis every day beginning at 4:20 a.m. until 3:10 a.m. Busses leave every fifteen minutes except during the rush hours at which time they leave every six minutes.

We are located 14 miles from one of the greatest internal water systems in the world. We are connected by rail, truck, and bus with the navigable streams and canals of the Mississippi, Missouri, and Ohio Rivers which total 13,394 miles. This system joins by water twenty states with a population of more than fifty million people. On this river system long-haul freight services are operated by the Federal Barge Line and the short haul is done by local packet lines. Our local trading area extends eight miles north, forty miles south, thirty miles east and seven miles west. Since we are located in the St. Louis metropolitan district our cost of living is fifteen per cent lower than cities of the same size not in a similar area.

## POSTAL SERVICE

In 1816, two years after Belleville was founded, the village had grown large enough to justify the establishment of a post office. It was called Bellvill-Illinois Territory Post Office (notice lack of the letter "E" in Belleville, which was added later.) It was officially opened on March 14, 1816, with Post Master James P. Estes in charge.

Correspondence was not indulged in then as extensively as it is today, due perhaps to the high postal rates. Postage was figured according to distance instead of weight and a

single letter to Lexington, Kentucky, required eighteen cents in postage. If it consisted of two sheets, or an envelope, its cost doubled, making it cost thirty-seven cents. A single letter from Belleville to New York cost twenty-five cents, while from here to St. Louis it took six cents.

On February 1, 1849, the following notice appeared in a local newspaper, "Mail lost." Then followed an explanation telling that the Eastern mail had been lost on Monday, while crossing Shoal Creek. The coach had been lost and the four horses had drowned, illustrating that the pioneer postal service, with its strictly theoretical mail schedules, was dependent upon the whims of nature. Two things, contributing to the great postal handicap in the early days, was the price of postage and the difficulties of travel during the winter months, when there were days and even weeks at a time when the mail could not be delivered.

In pioneer days, the only mail carriers we had were ones that carried the mail from one city to another. One of these was young Col. J. L. D. Morrison, who carried the mail from Kaskaskia to its surrounding cities, including Belleville. For this he rode a French pony, making the trips in a prompt and efficient manner.

In 1844, Belleville was fortunate enough to be on the Great Western Mail Route, which carried the mail from the East to the West. Beginning then, a four-horse mail stage passed through the village every day. This provided unusually good mail service and added another asset to the growing community.

In 1845, the postal rates were changed and greatly reduced. The charge now was five cents on letters of less than one half ounce for the first three hundred miles and ten cents for mail beyond that distance. In 1849 a uniform rate of three cents for the first half ounce, regardless of distance, plus six cents for every additional one half ounce, was adopted.

As the amount of mail increased, it had to be carried between

cities by means of coaches. Here again the difficulty of bad roads had to be confronted. The only carriers who could get through were those on horse back, but these carried only a small amount of mail. No one worried, however, not even the post master, for they knew that sooner or later it would arrive and depart regularly and on time when the roads improved. Still more serious than the bottomless roads, were the antics of the Mississippi River, which with methodical regularity, threw the schedule out of line. When the river went on a rampage, which it usually did in the spring and fall, the ferry could not cross with the mail to or from St. Louis. Neither could it in winter when it was filled with floating ice, all of which was a contributing factor towards the building of a bridge across the Mississippi. When, in 1874, the Eads Bridge was opened to traffic our city was no longer cut off from St. Louis by the whims of weather.

Free carrier service to homes became a reality on July 1, 1887. The city was divided into four districts and a carrier appointed for each one. Twenty-seven mail boxes were placed at convenient points throughout the city and collections were made at regular intervals. The citizens were very grateful for this action, which made our city one of the thirty-six in the state to have this kind of service.

The appointment of a new postmaster, by President Lincoln on January 9, 1865, started a custom that we occasionally follow. It was in that year that Colonel Hugo Wangelin became the postmaster. In 1894 his son Irvin H. Wangelin received the appointment by President Cleveland. Our last postmaster Herman G. Wangelin was appointed to that position by Franklin D. Roosevelt, December 31, 1934, and is the third generation of the family to hold that office. Our present postmaster Eugene Brauer was appointed by President Harry Truman.

In the early days, the location of the Post Office didn't remain static very long, for it was moved from time to time.



On March 14, 1846, it was moved to the brick building where Governor Reynolds had his law office; on May 5, 1858, it was moved directly west of the National Hotel; on February 5, 1859, it was moved to the Belleville House; on September 12, 1863, it was moved to Main and High; on April 30, 1869, it was moved back to the Belleville House; on July 4, 1873, it was moved to High and Washington; on January 23, 1899, a contract was let to equip a new post office in the building now used as a bus station, on the northeast corner of the Square; on May 8, 1903, it was moved to the northwest corner of the Square in the Lorey Building, now occupied by the Stiehl Drug Company; on November 11, 1911, it moved to its new \$100,000 building, located on the northwest corner of "A" and First Streets.

The postmasters, who served, and the day they took office were as follows: March 14, 1816, James P. Estes; September 10, 1819, Richard Groves; July 23, 1822, John Ringold; May 23, 1823, James Mitchell; November 28, 1839, Charles Sargent; November 26, 1840, James M. Reynolds; May 10, 1841, James Mitchell; July 3, 1845, William Snyder; October 1, 1849, James Mitchell; June 15, 1853, Champness Ball; October 5, 1858, James W. Hughes; March 27, 1861, Sharon Tyndale; January 9, 1865, Colonel Hugo Wangelin; March 11, 1873, Francis M. Taylor; June 13, 1877, Henry G. Millitizer; January 17, 1882, John B. Hay; March 1, 1886, Colonel Adolph Engelmann; February 14, 1890, James B. Willoughby; April 5, 1894, Irvin H. Wangelin; October 8, 1898, John E. Thomas; January 18, 1907, Cyrus Thompson; February 21, 1912, Louis Opp; August 1, 1913, Philip H. Sopp; May 8, 1922, Louis Opp; May 9, 1926, Herman Semmelroth; December 31, 1934, Herman G. Wangelin; October 19, 1950, Eugene Brauer.

In April of 1940 the Belleville office opened a branch at Scott Field to serve the military personnel stationed there. From a small room in the Headquarters building the facilities have grown to where a post office building now houses the postal



business in the first area with branches in the 2nd and 3rd areas.

Besides its many postal duties, the post office also issues and cashes money orders, sells U. S. Savings Bonds and Stamps, conducts a Postal Savings Bank and represents the United States Civil Service Commission in this area.

All postal employees are under civil service. The pay for regular clerks and carriers starts at \$2670 a year based on a forty-hour week. The pay for substitutes is one dollar and thirty-one cents per hour with no work week specified. Today there are ninety-seven employees at the Belleville and Scott Field offices. In addition to the Postmaster there are eight supervisors, thirty-one regular clerks, thirty-eight regular carriers, six substitute clerks, six substitute carriers, three rural route carriers, one special delivery messenger, and three custodial managers. The city is served by twenty-seven carrier routes and three rural routes serve the surrounding rural area. Four Star routes originate at this office.

The postal receipts have increased from practically nothing in 1816 to \$352,581.19 in 1949. In this same year the cancellations on first class mail reached an all time high of over 20,000,000 pieces.

## CITY WATER

Just as in all other communities, Belleville, too, had no regular water system, but depended entirely on private wells and the town pump, which was located on the Public Square. The water supply was as good as nature provided and, with the public well on the Square, was sufficient for the needs in pioneer days.

All went well until the summer of 1854 when the rainfall was so negligible that many of the private wells went dry. To prevent the hoarding of water, the town pump was locked

after a rush threatened to empty it. Many citizens objected to this so vehemently that one night the lock was smashed to pieces and a written notice was posted, declaring the pump to be a free institution, and that such "know-nothing proceedings," as that of putting it under lock and chain, would not be tolerated by those who love both freedom and water.

The demand for water continued to increase and in June, 1860, another public well was sunk on the Market Square and the water from it was declared to be of excellent quality.

The water of Richland Creek supplied most of the industries located along its banks, but it soon became evident that it was not the right thing to use in steam engines, for it sometimes produced dire results for the boilers.

With the growth of our city, it became evident that a greater supply of water was needed if we hoped to invite additional industry and then to keep its wheels turning.

In the past, many lakes had been built, additional shallow and deep wells had been sunk in the American Bottoms, but all of them furnished an insufficient amount of water and we were constantly searching for a greater supply. The deep well water came from a stratum known as St. Peters Sand and was of excellent quality but of insufficient quantity to satisfy the ever growing demand. Some of the wells at the foot of the bluffs contained water of an inferior quality and many berated those responsible for foisting this product upon the city as pure water. Even school officials contended it was unfit for pupils to drink.

Although Belleville never had a real water famine, there were times when the supply of water was rather low. Many futile attempts had been made before an unlimited supply of water was finally secured. The old story from the town pump to water from the Mississippi River is a long and hard one. Many fruitless starts had been made for a more adequate water supply and company after company had been incorporated

but they all failed, until in 1855 when a city-wide water system was begun.

In April, 1885, the digging of the trench and the laying of the pipe for the proposed water works got under way. To Edward Abend, president of the company, went the honor to head the elaborate ceremony held on the Public Square that marked the beginning of this water works. He also had the honor of breaking the macadam with a pick thereby starting the ditch in which the pipes were laid. In his address he declared, that for twenty years, he had been working for the very thing they were about to witness, the breaking of the ground for a water system. Mayor Herman G. Weber threw out the first shovel full of dirt and congratulated the people that what they had long before hoped for, and wished for, was soon to become a reality.

The new company constructed a reservoir water system in the Richland Creek bottoms north of our city. The storage reservoir had a capacity of forty million gallons, a filtering reservoir held one million gallons and a distributing reservoir held three million gallons. When these were completed, the city was very proud of the improvements that had been made, but as our city continued to grow and as more homes and industries were built, the supply again became inadequate.

In 1888 the company began work on the thirty-acre reservoir now known as Lake Christine. By 1890 the supply again became so low that factories were forced to close down during some of the summer months. In 1893 the company had a third reservoir, this one known as Lake No. 3, but today as Lake Lorraine, with a 70,000,000 gallon capacity. Lake Christine held 120,000,000 gallons and the first reservoir that had been built held 40,000,000 more gallons making a total of 230,000,000 gallons. These lakes, large as they were, could not cope with the growing demands. Then in 1897, the Deep Well Water Works Company was organized. It absorbed the

old lake system of the previous firm and sank a series of artesian wells, 500 feet deep, at the foot of Water Tower Hill at the south end of the city.

However, again by 1908, a new and greater water supply had become absolutely necessary and therefore seven wells were sunk in the American Bottoms, near the village of Edgemont, and a pumping station was erected there. These wells furnished an abundance of water that was seemingly pure and healthful, but of such hard quality, that our people hesitated to use it.

By 1912, there loomed another shortage of water and a new source was again sought. It was decided in that year, that the Mississippi River was the only solution to our water problem. So a water main was built, which connected with the East St. Louis Water Company. The pumping station at Edgemont was used to force the water up to Belleville's altitude.

The shallow wells, the reservoirs, the deep wells, and those in the American Bottoms, were all abandoned now and on September 12, 1912, our water system was connected with that in East St. Louis. Today we are supplied with the inexhaustible Mississippi River water flowing into our water mains.

The East St. Louis and Interurban Water Company supplies not only our city, but also eighteen other municipalities. Water is taken from the Mississippi River, opposite and below where the Missouri river enters it at the rate of 30,000,000 gallons every twenty-four hours, of which Belleville uses 5,000,000 gallons a day. The Company's purification and pumping plants are so arranged that they can be readily expanded to provide any demand which may be made upon them by the community served. Belleville has two supply lines, both twelve inches in diameter, from the Edgemont pumping station, which assures us continuous service. A stand pipe and reservoir provide storage facilities, and a tank also affords storage at Edgemont. The

city is well piped with distribution lines and fire hydrants, giving assurance of water facilities and fire protection. The average pressure maintained at the pumping station is seventy-five pounds, but the average throughout the system is fifty pounds. The manager of the Belleville branch today is E. S. Tillotson.

Our city has also built a sewage disposal system adequate to take care of a population of fifty thousand as soon as the intercepting sewer and treatment plants are completed.

## DEVELOPMENT OF OUR FIRE DEPARTMENT 1841-1943

Belleville's efficient fire department is the outgrowth of over one hundred years of good service. It was in 1841 that the first fire department was organized under the name of the Illinois Town Fire Company. It was located on South Jackson Street in the identical place where Engine House No. 1 now stands.

Early fire engines were very different from those of today. The first one was bought in New York and shipped by water to St. Louis via New Orleans, and from there it was sent over land to Belleville. It was a crude, hand-drawn and hand-pumped affair, very small in size when compared to our modern ones. It soon proved too small to serve the ever growing needs of our population, which by 1844 numbered 1,964.

To meet the increasing demand for fire fighting equipment a second engine was bought in 1844 at a cost of \$400. Similar to the first one, it too, was a hand-drawn and hand-pumped affair. It was a great improvement over the old bucket brigade, the only means of fighting fire in the early days, although it still was handicapped, in that it was hand-drawn and couldn't be moved very fast. As an inducement to those pulling the fire engine to get to the scene of the fire in as short a time as possible, the Village Board in 1848 offered a reward of two dollars for the first water cart to arrive there and one dollar to the one that arrived second.



In 1848 Volunteer Fire Company No. 2 was organized and by 1852 the city had a total fire department consisting of 89 men, incredible as that may seem. This second organization later changed its name to Union Company. To better equip them for fire fighting, a popular subscription of \$100 was raised, and the Village Board agreed to buy fifty Indian rubber buckets at \$1.75 each. Both engines were used only for pumping water out of the wells in cases of fire. The additional buckets added to the efficiency of the department.

Through the help of A. C. Heinzelman, a member of the Village Board, a third volunteer fire company was organized on April 27, 1859, and was called the Washington Company. In 1861 George Heinzelman was elected its captain and it was then that its name was changed to The Invincible No. 3. The Village Board bought a new fire engine for them costing \$600. The three rival companies had such distinguished names as St. Clair No. 1; Illinois No. 2; and Invincible No. 3.

With improved pumping equipment, a greater source of water supply had to be obtained, so in 1865 the city engineer was requested by the City Board to plan for the construction of 24 cisterns, each holding 1,000 barrels of water, and which were to cost about \$52 each. These cisterns were not to be over 600 feet apart so that 300 feet of hose, attached to the pump, would reach a cistern anywhere in the city.

As time went on the names of the three departments again underwent a change. Company 1, located at Freeburg and South Charles and East Grant streets, became the South Belleville Company; Engine House No. 2, located on the northeast corner of Illinois and B streets became the St. Clair Volunteers, while Engine House No. 3, located at South Jackson and Washington streets became known as the Illinois Volunteers.

It was in 1872, that the Union Fire Company opened its new engine house on Jackson street. This building was 29 by 50 feet, two stories, walls 13 inches thick and well braced with



iron. It was designed by William Hess and built by Charles Dehnent. The vacant lot in the rear which measured 60 by 200 feet was beautified with trees and shrubbery.

The City Council bought the first steam fire engine and at its trial run had enough steam to pump water 120 feet into the air from a one and one-half inch nozzle and for a distance of 270 feet from a two and three-fourth inch nozzle. It was claimed that this was the first engine of its kind in the mid-west and our city was very proud of the water throwing ability of its first steam fire engine.

By 1878 the Belleville Fire Department had changed from a volunteer department to one on a salary basis. The firemen received from \$5 to \$70 a month, the last being the salary for the fire chief. The firemen were still able to proceed with their private business, but were subject to instant call by the city at the ringing of a bell.

On January 8, 1886, the City Council raised their salaries. That of the hosemen was fixed at ten dollars per month, and five dollars for their first hour, and two dollars for each additional hour, while fighting a fire. Assistant hosemen received eight dollars per month and four dollars for the first hour, and two dollars for each additional hour while helping fight a fire.

In 1878 a hook and ladder wagon made in St. Louis, was purchased, and it was equipped with new and improved chemical fire extinguishers, that could be used on small fires. The city was now divided into five equal districts and an electrical alarm system was established. The twenty-one alarm boxes were rented from the Electric Company at twelve dollars and fifty cents per year.

On September 22, 1916, the first fire engine, fully equipped for fighting small fires, was received. One month later it answered its first call to a fire one and one-half miles away, covering the distance in three minutes. On January 29, 1931,

our most recent fire engine house, located at 5900 West Main Street, was opened to Fire Engine Crew No. 3. It was erected there to serve the Rock Road district west of 35th Street. Today Belleville receives fire protection from three well-located fire stations. A total of twenty-six men are employed, and the equipment consists of seven motorized units. Our losses by fires have been reduced to the minimum and compare favorably with those of any other city in the state. In recent years, Fire Prevention Week has been duly observed during the first week in October. The one held in 1937 fittingly displayed wooden tombstones inscribed as follows: (1) I smoked in bed; (2) I cleaned with gasoline; (3) I started a fire with kerosene; (4) I didn't clean my chimney; and (5) Waste paper and rags were piled in the attic of my house.

The real estate and hose equipment of our fire department is valued at \$150,000. Its firemen are well trained and while at work they furnish an excellent example of individual responsibility combined with group cooperation. They have been trained to use and not to loose their heads.

The members of the Fire Department in 1950 were: Fire Chief, Albert Nebgen, Edward Falcetti, Frank Resch, James Paxon, Fred Thompson, Fred Bruss, Emil Zinser, John Finklein, Earl Ritzheimer, John Wade, Philip Klotz, Frank Hart, Emil Seiler, Ervin Schmitz, Frank Bader, Wilbur Rodenmeyer, Robert Sauer, Richard Kensinger, Edward Hock, John Chouinard, Edward Wilson, Charles Braun, Clarence List, Robert Walta, Floyd Schmitz, Norman Schlesinger, Raymond Daesch, Clarence Halcomb and three deskmen, Ewald Henke, Edward Rodenmeyer, and Emil Hackenbruch.

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

As far back as 1814, when Belleville was first organized as a village, it had its officer of the law, a constable, as he was known in those days, and he was the entire municipal law.

Although at times exposed to danger, his pay was meager, for it consisted only of his share of the fines or fees collected for serving writs.

"I'll call the law," was not heard as frequently in that day as it is now, because calling the law then was a difficult matter. The entire law was centered in the constable and the law was wherever he was, and sometimes the question was, where was he?

It was one thing for the constable to get his man but it was an entirely different problem to get him safely to the jail. Sometimes he and his victim became quite well acquainted as they walked to the Police Station. Sometimes some citizen, chancing to be driving by, would give them a lift. Again if no hack appeared, the prisoner, whose offense was nothing more in many instances than being drunk, would have to be carried to the jail on a house shutter, or given a ride on a wheel barrow, or a forced walk.

If the occasion demanded it, there was, of course, a major county law officer, the sheriff, to lend a helping hand to the constable.

Thieving and burglary were our most serious local problems and to combat these a volunteer watch was organized, its members taking turns at patrolling the streets at night. This was far from pleasant work on the unlighted streets, especially on a dark and rainy night. The night patrol, however, did much good because many of the suspicious characters who had long infested our city were soon driven out. Because of its good work, the night patrol was looked upon with great favor by the people.

The constable's work increased with the growth of the community and in 1850 the office of City Marshall was created. Legend has it that the Marshall was supposed to be tall, have a mustache, and wear a blue serge suit with the trouser legs stuffed into black boots. At first he did not receive a regular

salary but had to depend upon fines and fees for his financial reward. His good work was soon rewarded by regular pay, ample enough to permit him to devote his entire time and energy to the job.

As late as 1850 promenading porkers were found on the city's streets, but then the City Council passed an ordinance permitting the Marshall to charge a \$3 fee from their respective owners whenever they came to reclaim a hog.

In 1854 the City Council voted to give the city marshall help by appointing a deputy marshall for each of the four wards which then made up the city. This was still insufficient as shown by the crime wave we had in the latter months of 1865. Four special policemen were appointed for the four wards at a salary of \$75 a month. This force of night police was the nucleus from which the first regular organized police force in Belleville grew. By the ordinance of 1867 the department consisted of—a city marshall, chief of police, a captain of the night police, and four policemen. By 1890, there were 12—a city marshall, a night police captain, a sergeant, and nine policemen. In 1913, there were 15 policemen, and in 1939 there were 21 members comprising the department. In 1951 it totalled 35 members.

In May, 1913, the city bought its first motorcycle for the police department. Others were soon added until today the department boasts of seven motorized units, equipped squad cars and motorcycles.

On July 7, 1887, a "hoodlum wagon," known as the famed "Black Maria" was bought at a cost of \$234. It was a wagon of effulgent splendor, decorated in a bright coat of red paint, with gilded lettering and brass lamps and it seated six occupants with ease. It was used by the city until 1921 when it was replaced by the modern way of hauling prisoners to jail, namely the patrol car. The patrol wagon was sold in that year to the highest bidder, which was \$42.50, and it was wrecked as junk on June 18, 1929.

With the coming of the telephone, the police department was one of the first to be equipped with it. In 1921, the effectiveness of the system was greatly increased, when twenty-one telephones were placed at strategic points throughout the city to form the first police alarm system in our city. These have since been replaced by a radio station in 1937, use of which enables police to be at hand within a few minutes after a crime has been committed.

Police are given special schooling in personal defense, in jujitsu handling of prisoners, in hand-cuffing and searching, in writing and interpreting reports, in types of crimes, in clues that should be followed up, blood tests, death masks, taking foot prints, tire tracks and finger printing. The instructors are usually members of the police force, who were trained for this work by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. A local police school was started in 1938 and is today equipped with an outdoor shooting range where both slow and rapid fire shooting is practiced with shot guns, pistols, and sub-machine guns. Today there are thirty-four men, including the health officers, chief, captain, sergeant and lieutenant, in the department.

Finger printing is regarded today as very essential in police work. All persons arrested for major crimes are finger printed and copies thereof are sent to Washington, where a permanent record is kept. This department consists of a Laten finger printing set, which contains printer's ink, printing cards, card holders, inking pad, powder, lifting tab, and a filing cabinet. It is also equipped to take plaster casts of foot, tire and bar marks.

The police squad cars are equipped with transmitters, receiving set and sending sets, and powerful search lights. They are armed with guns, carry first aid kits, and cruise over the entire city at all times and are used chiefly in making investigations. The police motorcycles carry a receiving set but no sending set. Their chief duty is to watch traffic, listen to the police broadcasts and be ready for any emergency.

The police broadcasting station is fully and completely equipped. Squad cars, cruising the city, report their location to the station at regular intervals.

Today's police force is divided into three shifts: (1) 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., with Chief of Police Reese Dobson and Lieutenant Walter Ruebel in charge; (2) 3 p.m. to 11 p.m., with Sergeant Clarence Hassal; (3) 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. under Captain Frank Riesenberger.

The police force today consists of 10 officers and 24 patrolmen.. They are as follows: Chief: Reese Dobson; Captain: Frank Riesenberger; Lieutenant: Walter Ruebel; Sergeants: Robert Bell, Clarence Hassall and Clarence Mullett; Corporals: Herbert Kaltenbronn, Andrew Kirkwood, Paul Klincar and Norman Simonin; Licence Collector: Walter Magin; Police-men: David Beese, Frank Bott, Raymond Butzinger, Charles Groom, Monroe Hodo, Oscar Joffray, Fred Johnson, Emil Kluge, Milton Kroenig, Richard Kurrus, George Lawrence, Elmer Lehman, Walter Magin, William McEvers, William Mertens, Jr., William Mertens, Sr., Percy Miller, Wallace Miller, Fred Moessinger, Hugo Paule, Melvin Poniske, William Rutherford, John Smith and Raymond Sterthman.



## CHAPTER VII

# Local Institutions

PUBLIC BUILDINGS 1814-1942

One of the principal buildings of former times was the Market House, located on the Public Square, in which all meats and groceries were sold. The law then not only required that all foods had to be sold here, but went so far as to fix the market hours, and to forbid the selling of fresh beef, pork, veal, lamb, or mutton in less quantity than a quarter. A farmer, however, was exempt from this law and could sell his home-cured bacon, sausage, and other meats at any time and any place.

A market master presided over all activities of the market, and it was also his duty to direct farmers to keep the market clean, to preserve order and to suppress fights.

A city ordinance of 1855 prohibited any person from tying or hitching a horse to the Market House, and made it a misdemeanor to lead an animal into the Market House, to sleep on the tables, to threaten the market master, to allow dogs to follow one through the market, or to throw melon rinds or garbage about. Corn meal, hominy, oats, potatoes, turnips, carrots, apples, peaches, and other vegetables and fruits had to be packed either in pints, quarts, gallons, pecks, or half bushels. Butter had to be sold in one-half, one, two, and three pound rolls, and penalties were set for any unfair measures and weights.

The butcher stalls in the Market House were auctioned off

for a term of one year on the first Monday in April. One-half the rent had to be paid in advance. Those selling vegetables and farm produce paid the market master a sum of five dollars and had to provide themselves with a suitable bench or table. It became the duty of the market master to protect these tables and benches from being damaged and to see to it that they were occupied by their rightful owners only. Outside the market, in the Market Square, a two-horse wagon could occupy a space for 20 cents daily, a one-horse wagon for 10 cents, and a basket-seller for 5 cents.

Having outlived its usefulness, the old Market House on the Square was sold for \$29.00, and a new Market Square located between Illinois and High streets, extending east of the present Bell Telephone building, was provided. It was bought by the city in 1885 from J. Mitchell and J. Thomas for \$4,228.00. The lot adjoining the Market Square with a frontage of twenty-eight feet on A Street, was also acquired by the city from S. B. Chandler.

The new Market House was opened for business on July 1, 1857, well supplied with foods of all kind at very moderate prices. Belleville was indeed proud of its new market for the city contended it was the best market house in the state.

The market flourished, and for years it continued to be favored with protective legislation by the various city councils. An ordinance had been passed which prohibited the selling of food outside the Market House by others during market hours. It was no uncommon sight to see the proud, masculine heads of some of the leading families doing the family shopping. Usually a young son accompanied them to carry the laden basket home, while their elders went on to the day's business.

The hucksters sold their wares from crude, wooden tables that lined the street edge of the sidewalk, over which a protective porch had been built. Their wagons or buggies were backed up against the curb, making unloading easy.

In 1890 a new ordinance permitted grocers with fixed establishments to do business while the market was open, but peddling of vegetables or fruits, was not allowed during market hours.

Prominent among butchers who occupied the indoor stalls of the Market House, were Jacob Bischof, Sr., John Thebus, and Henry A. Heinemann.

With the coming of the corner grocery store the city market began to decline. The first to abandon it were the butchers, and by 1900 hucksters, too, had almost entirely faded from the picture. In that year the street department, looking for storage room, took over the Market House and used it as a street railway freight depot. In it were housed also the street rollers and other equipment. By this time it had already become known as the Street Roller House. Thus it remained until it was torn down by the city in November, 1934, and the premises turned into a parking lot. With the market's disappearance, the corner grocery store began to flourish, but its existence, too, is being threatened today by the chain grocery stores.

Although Belleville had a post office since 1814, it wasn't until almost a hundred years later that a permanent post office was built by the federal government and completed in 1911. Its dedication was a major event, with the public invited to inspect the new building. In the receiving line were Congressman W. A. Rodenberg, who was responsible for securing the building, Mayor Fred J. Kern, and Postmaster Cyrus Thompson.

An addition to the Post Office building in 1923 measured 33 by 69 feet and provided an additional 2000 square feet of floor space to be used as a work room and mailing vestibule.

Because of its central location, Belleville had replaced Cahokia as the county seat of St. Clair county. Since no special building had as yet been erected to serve as a court house, a long narrow one-story log cabin that stood on the Public Square was used for that purpose, and George Blair received six dollars

for hauling the records, benches, seats, and tables from the old court house at Cahokia to the new location.

When this court house proved inadequate, civic-minded George Blair donated 25 lots to the county, which were to be sold and the money used to build a new court house. The contract was given to Etienne Pensoneau in the summer of 1814. He was ordered to erect a two-story unpainted frame building for the contract price of \$1,525.00 which was only partly paid while the county remained in debt for about \$1,200.00 until 1818 when the Sheriff was ordered to pay the balance. The building was occupied in 1817 and was considered quite large and up-to-date for the times. It was located on the northwest part of the Public Square and remained in use until 1833 when the need for a larger court house again became evident.

St. Clair county's third court house, begun in 1829 for \$3,189.00 also fronted on the Public Square, standing just west of the first one. Its proportions were larger then the other two had been, for by this time the county had a population of 20,000. It was a brick building finished in 1831, but not occupied until 1833.

Ample though it seemed at first, three decades later it too, was too small, and ways and means were being discussed of erecting another. The contract for the new building was let on May 27, 1857, to a Mr. Holder. It was to be of brick and stone construction two stories high, with a basement under the entire building. At the time it was considered equal to any in the state, outside of Chicago. With the coming of the Civil War, the construction, which had already begun, was delayed, but the building was finally completed in that year, at a war-inflated cost of \$115,000. It was considered fire proof because of the materials used in its construction. The roof was of copper and iron, and the floors were slabs of cut stone imported from Europe.

In 1862 a contract of \$4,384 was let for furnishing the

interior. This is the St. Clair County Court House today, the fourth one to be located in Belleville and the fifth in the county.

The first court house at Cahokia was razed and rebuilt for the World's Fair in St. Louis in 1904. After being reconstructed, it was once more torn down and rebuilt for the Chicago World's Fair in 1934. Now it again graces its original site in Cahokia, having been restored by the Illinois Department of Public Works and Buildings, appearing as it did in 1793 when Cahokia was one of the largest cities in the Northwest Territory. It is being maintained by the state.

No county jail was provided for in the first court house. Pioneers usually took the law into their own hands, believing it unnecessary to trouble the courts with matters they felt qualified to handle. Informal trials were held and punishment at once inflicted. Many, when found guilty, were allowed the privilege of leaving the country, thereby escaping a penalty that might have been much more severe.

St. Clair County's first two jails were located at Cahokia. The first was built as a part of the court house. The second was built in 1812 at a cost of \$200, and was an exceptional building. Its dimensions were 14 by 18 feet. A two-story building with seven feet of space between the two floors, it was made entirely of logs that were 12 inches in diameter, so as to make the building proof against escape.

The construction of the third county jail, the first to be built in Belleville, began in February, 1816. Its contractor was Henry Sharp, and it was located on the northwest corner of the Public Square. It, too, was a small log structure, and cost \$360. After four years it was replaced by a fourth county jail, a brick building constructed by William Graves. It was located in the center of Illinois street on the north edge of the Square, where it remained until 1836, when it was abandoned for the fifth jail, built in 1836 by David Snyder.



It also was located on North Illinois street, adjoining the corner lot now occupied by Feickert's Bakery. When finished, it was regarded as one of the most modern jails of the time. Actually, however, it was an excellent example of a dungeon, for it had no ventilation, no windows, a few holes three or four inches wide in the ceiling, and the air in it was hardly fit for reptiles. In the winter it was damp and cold, and in the summer unbearably hot. In 1840 the grand jury complained about the filth and dirt in the cells and stated that in their opinion it was nothing more than a dungeon that would endanger the prisoners' health, and a disgrace to the community.

The sixth county jail was erected in 1849 and located on the southeast corner of East Washington and Jackson streets, where the First Church of Christ Scientist now stands. It was two stories high, surrounded by a high brick wall, and large enough to accommodate twenty-four prisoners. It was the most costly of all the jails that had been built up to that time, totalling \$7,977.00.

The seventh county jail, the fifth one to be built in Belleville, was begun in 1885 and completed in April, 1886, at a total cost of \$33,753.00. Considered very modern for its time it served as an example for many jails elsewhere. It was fitted with what was then considered superb confining equipment, and is still in use on West Washington street just west of the County Court House on a site where Abraham Anderson once brewed his famous lager and where he dug his gloomy caverns in which it aged.

It wasn't until 1857 that Belleville's city government acquired a home of its own. Prior to that time its meetings were held wherever the city fathers designated a place. In 1855 though, a definite date—the first Monday of each month—was set by ordinance.

In the year 1857, a new engine house was built on the north side of East A street about half way between North Illinois



and High streets, and its second floor served as the meeting place of the city council. It was a substantial brick building of which the city was very proud. A new fire bell was acquired in 1859 and placed in the council room.

But it was not until 1869 that a city hall was erected. It was built on the Market Square, adjoining the eastern end of the Market House and standing approximately fifty feet from North High street. Its architectural lines followed those of the Greek Revival period. It was a two-story brick building and in its upper story it housed, not only the city offices, but the library of the Belleville Saengerbund and Library Society as well. The lower floor was used as an engine house. Here the city officials met until April 19, 1873.

In 1872 the congregation of the Presbyterian Church, which then was located on North Illinois street where the present Bell Telephone company's building now stands, purchased a lot on South High street for the purpose of erecting a new church. Because of its proximity to the other city property, the city council deemed it wise to buy the old building when the elders decided to sell it for \$4,500. After renovation the first floor was used as the meeting for the council and contained the office of the city clerk and the city marshal. Its basement was used as the "calaboose" or jail. Fire bells were placed in its turret, for in those days a fire alarm was always sounded by the ringing of bells. High wooden steps that ascended from the north and south, led up to the porch that extended across the front of this building which remained the seat of city government until the present City Hall was built in 1892.

On October 23, 1891, the city council ordered the purchase of the property on the corner of Illinois and Washington streets for the purpose of building a new and larger city hall. The purchase price agreed upon was \$4,500, but because of the city's indebtedness construction was not started until March 5, 1892.

In that year the board of directors of the Belleville Public Library submitted a proposal to the city council, together with plans and specifications, for the approval of the erection of a building which would be built in the library's name but could be used for both library and city hall purposes. The city agreed to this and at once appropriated \$53,600 for the cost of the building. The library was to occupy the second floor and the city offices the lower. The Library remained here until it moved into its present building in 1916. The city then took over the entire building and the first meeting of the city council was held in the old library quarters on August 7, 1917.

## CHURCHES AND AFFILIATED SOCIETIES

A modern poet has said, "Show me the churches and the cemeteries of a community and I will tell you the Godliness and the spirituality of its people." Applying this to Belleville with its many beautiful churches and well-kept cemeteries one may rest assured that this quotation casts no reflections on the religion and culture of Belleville citizens, who are proud of the fact that about seventy per cent of its people are affiliated with some church. We have long realized that mankind cannot pass through life without some philosophy and virtue obtained from religion and its teachings. We would, perhaps, relapse into a savage state were we not sustained by the law of "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

In the early days of this community there were no churches. Clergymen were very scarce and their visits were like those of angels, few and far between. Yet our forefathers were a pious lot, belonging to a God-fearing generation. They firmly believed in a life after death and that they could some day ascend to Heaven.

In building the early churches, women played a very important part. In fact, many helped to lay their foundations not in the sense of mixing the mortar and laying bricks, but through

their untiring effort of giving suppers, bazaars, and food sales.

Some of these early places of worship stand today as monuments to the Supreme Being. Their walls are of brick and stone of another era, worn by age, yet mellowed by time to a greater beauty. They are a monument to the spiritual lives that dwell within, of the faith of God that lives in the hearts of men that built these structures. Therein lies the greatest beauty of all churches.

The oldest Protestant church in St. Clair county to have had a continued existence is the Methodist Church at Shiloh. The oldest Catholic church in Illinois is the one at Cahokia built by Father F. Panet, S. J. in 1700. The oldest Catholic church in Belleville was built on the present site of St. Peter's Cathedral in 1843, with Father Kuenster as its first regular priest. Before his coming here, missionaries from Cahokia visited the area and offered the Holy Sacrifice of Mass in private homes which stood in the present 300 block of South Illinois street.

Today there are approximately thirty churches in Belleville, representing practically every denomination, each one having a worthy history of its own, but space will permit only the name and location of most of them. They are arranged according to the date of their construction, and are as follows:

Year

1831	First Baptist <i>Rev. Russell T. Phillips</i>	North Jackson and "B"
1832	Union Methodist <i>Rev. Dr. W. L. Hanbaum</i>	10 East Washington
1839	First Presbyterian <i>Rev. Dr. Frank Eversull</i>	225 South High
1839	St. Paul's Evangelical <i>Rev. B. J. Koehler</i>	2nd and West "B"
1842	St. Peter's Cathedral <i>Rev. Msgr. Raymond L. Harbaugh</i>	3rd and Harrison

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1862	Zion Lutheran <i>Rev. C. Thomas Spitz</i>	"A" and Church
1878	Latter Day Saints <i>Rev. J. Edward Nicholson, Jr.</i>	2020 West Main
1882	St. George's Episcopal <i>Rev. Percy Miller</i>	105 East "D"
1883	St. Luke's <i>Rev. F. A. Kaiser</i>	201 North Church
1893	Christ Evangelical <i>Rev. Alfred F. Schroeder</i>	24 North 14th
1894	St. Mary's <i>Rev. Joseph Orlet</i>	1716 West Main
1906	Epworth Methodist <i>Rev. Dr. L. S. McKown</i>	4715 Walter
1908	First Divine Scientist <i>Rev. Emma Stolberg</i>	311 East Lincoln
1913	Signal Hill Lutheran <i>Rev. William A. Wenger</i>	8100 West Main
1913	Signal Hill Methodist <i>Rev. H. C. Brown</i>	45 South 95th
1919	Beth Israel Synagogue <i>Rabbi Abraham Hartman</i>	227 North High
1920	First Church of Christ Scientist <i>Rev. H. L. Starling</i>	112 North Jackson
1925	Blessed Sacrament <i>Rev. Louis F. Ell</i>	8505 West Main
1925	St. Henry's <i>Rev. Edward Killian O.M.I.</i>	5301 West Main
1925	St. Theresa <i>Very Rev. Wm. Hoff</i>	1100 Lebanon Ave.
1929	First Christian <i>Rev. Dale Wilhoit</i>	30th and West Main

1935	Trinity Evangelical <i>Rev. Theodore Rasche</i>	47 North Douglas
1936	Full Gospel Tabernacle <i>Rev. T. M. Kimberlin</i>	"B" and Church
1942	Apostolic (Pentecostal) <i>Rev. Paul Froese</i>	LaSalle and Sherman
1942	Bethel Temple <i>Rev. J. O. Underwood</i>	805 Scheel
1950	Westview Baptist Church <i>Rev. Eugene T. Pratt</i>	24th and West Main
1950	Latter Day Saints <i>Rev. Dudley Brown</i>	611 East McClintock

Many church societies, most of these women's groups, exist today to help the church financially. Some were organized when the church was founded and are still functioning. Without these organizations many churches could not exist.

One of the oldest of these organizations is the Altar Society of St. Mary's Parish functioning under the name of the Senior Ladies' Sodality. It originated in 1894, the year the church was dedicated. Miss Mary Graul was its first prefect.

The Rosary Confraternity of St. Peter's Cathedral, for both men and women members, was established in 1865 with Theodore Sickman as its first president. In 1860 the St. Vincent Orphan Society, and in 1870 the Young Ladies' Sodality were established.

The Ladies' Aid Society of St. Paul's Church was organized more than 75 years ago, with Mrs. Fredericka Wehrle as its first president. A complete record of the minutes of this society is one of its proud possessions.

On October 20, 1871 the Ladies Aid Society of the Jackson Street Methodist Church was organized by Mrs. Hienz, the wife of the pastor at that time, who was also its first president.

The Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the First

Methodist Church came into being in 1872 with Mrs. Willing as its first president.

The Lutheran Aid Society, with Mrs. Loos as the first president, was established in 1876.

The Ladies' Aid Society of Christ Church, the oldest women's organization of that congregation, was organized in 1893 with Mrs. Phillip Schmitt as president.

The oldest society in the First Baptist Church is the Halcyon Club whose first members met in 1896 at the home of Mrs. M. W. Weir, with Miss Sophie Weir as its first president.

The Art Needle Work Society is the oldest women's organization in St. George's Episcopal Church. It was established in 1896 with Mrs. Amelia Reineke as its first president.

## ST. PETERS CATHEDRAL, 1837-1944

When, in 1814, the county seat was transferred from Cahokia to Belleville, a number of Catholics also moved here. Among these early settlers were the Pensoneau, Munie, Joffray, Mersinger, Adam, Fegan, Boul, Germain, Rabo, Stauder, Priegler, Karlskind, Pfeiffer, Perrin, Lutz, and Fournie families. The nearest church then was at Cahokia, and these early people attended services there until visiting priests held Mass in their homes.

The first written record of Mass being celebrated in Belleville was entered on the Cahokia records December 8 and 9, 1836, by Father Louisel, who stated that he said Mass at the home of Mr. Chandler, and that fifteen or twenty persons attended each day. In 1837, John O'Brien donated land on which to build a church. Reverend Charles Meyer, stationed at Prairie Du Long from 1838 to 1843, visited Belleville every two months and said Mass at first in the old court house and later in the home of the Huber family. In 1842 arrived the first resident pastor named Reverend Joseph Kuenster, and soon a two-acre tract was bought from Mr. Joseph Meyer for his church. The



cornerstone was laid by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Peter R. Kenrick of St. Louis, in 1843. The first church was sixty by forty feet, but because of a shortage of finances, progress was slow.

The next pastor was Reverend C. H. Ostlangenberg, and by this time his parish consisted of 130 families whose nationality backgrounds were German, French, Irish, and Bohemian. The first church, completed and dedicated by Bishop William Quarter of Chicago in May, 1847, was used until 1863 when it was replaced by another. The cornerstone of the second church was laid by Bishop H. D. Juncker of Alton. It was completed in 1866 at a cost of \$87,000 and dedicated on November 6, 1866.

This church remained in use until January 4, 1912, when at six o'clock in the evening a fire, due to defective wiring, or some other cause, completely destroyed its interior and the roof. So far as is known, Joseph B. Reis of South Illinois street turned in the alarm to the Jackson Street fire department. George Kohl, the ten-year old son of Emil J. Kohl, discovered the blaze, which started underneath the roof. The boy notified Mr. Reis, who immediately turned in the alarm. The next morning the walls of the building and the spire were all that remained. Thus, the second building, then known as St. Peter's Cathedral, entailed a loss of perhaps \$100,000.

Labor, worry, details of finance and supervision followed the building of the third cathedral. The building committee consisted of Messrs. H. G. Reis, J. J. Gundlach, George C. Rebhan, Joseph B. Reis, Dominic Bauer, and Peter Fellner.

In October, 1913, the present cathedral was completed, the largest, most massive, dignified, and beautiful church of the diocese.

The first great event celebrated in it was the consecration of the Rt. Rev. Henry Althoff on February 24, 1914. In preparation for the event, the interior of this towering Gothic structure was redecorated to make what today is believed to be

one of the most beautiful buildings in the Middle West. In that same year also occurred the elevation of the pastor of the Cathedral, the Rev. Joseph Mueller, to the rank of Domestic Prelate, which honor gives him the title of the Right Reverend Monsignor Joseph M. Mueller.

On January 7, 1887, the Diocese of Belleville was created and the city was selected as the seat of a bishopric. On April 25, 1888, Bishop John Janssen was consecrated as the first bishop of the diocese.

On September 23, 1934, the first native of Belleville to receive the title of monsignor, the Very Rev. M. J. Gruenewald, was invested with the title, together with the office of Papal Chamberlin. The Most Rev. Henry Althoff presided at the investiture. The investiture ceremonies for the Very Rev. Msgr. John F. Fallon of Belleville took place at the same time at Notre Dame Academy. He had been resident chaplain of the academy but now became the first diocesan school superintendent.

Celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the Diocese of Belleville, which has been an Episcopal See for over fifty years, was of interest to all Catholics of not only this district but of neighboring ones. This district extends as far south as Cairo and contains approximately 70,000 Catholics. On the same day the Rev. Henry Althoff, the Bishop of Belleville, was also honored, for it was the Silver Jubilee of his consecration.

In that same year, 1939, its Centennial, St. Peter's Cathedral was also consecrated to the service of God.

## LEADING PROTESTANT CHURCHES

The Protestant churches too had early representation in the community for as early as 1779 the Rev. J. W. Lee preached the First Methodist sermon in the city, although it was not until 1832 that a Methodist church was built. It stood at the northeast corner of West Washington and South Third streets.

According to James Affleck, one of the earliest pioneers, its bell was the first church bell to be rung in Belleville. The bell was too heavy for the building, so it was suspended in a walnut tree that stood on the premises. Among the early circuit riders, for that is how the early pastors were known as they travelled from church to church to conduct services, were John Dew, Samuel Thompson, William L. Deneen, Joseph Edmonson, and John S. Barger.

The present Methodist Church, located on East Washington street, was dedicated on December 23, 1849, by Rev. Wentworth. Its cost was between seven and eight thousand dollars. Rev. Rutledge was pastor at the time. The parsonage was built in 1859. It was in that year also that a gas lighting system was installed in the church. A new organ was installed in November 1873, and in November 1878 the Heinzelman Brothers donated a 1500 pound bell for the new steeple. In 1937 Mrs. Florence Rayhill, widow of Dr. Charles G. Rayhill, donated the present organ in memory of her husband.

The First Baptist Church of Belleville was organized on September 17, 1831. Its first meeting was held in the "Brick Hall" that stood on the corner of South High and Lincoln streets. In 1833 it held its services in the court house, but in May, 1844, the congregation contracted for a church building of its own. This they built on the present site of the Penny Store at 213-215 East Main street. It was a brick building, thirty by forty feet, and it was dedicated on September 20, 1845, the dedication sermon being delivered by Elder James Lemen. Its steeple was added in 1853 and it was then that the town clock was placed therein.

The congregation used this building as a place of worship until 1880, when they sold it to C. A. Monk, who used it as farm implement store. The church services were then held in the Rentchler Building, which stood where the Sears-Roebuck store now stands.

Meanwhile, the church purchased the corner of Jackson and East B streets, the former site of the old Presbyterian Church. Here the present church was erected at a cost of \$12,000, and was dedicated in June, 1883, by Rev. Kenrick.

In June, 1887, the old Presbyterian Church, which had been built on that corner in 1839 by T. H. Kimber, and which was later used as a residence for himself, was torn down to make place for a parsonage, which cost \$2,200. In 1906 a memorial window, honoring the Rev. J. M. Peck, a former pastor, was placed in the church. Until 1921, the church was known as the Baptist Church of Belleville. It was then that its name was changed to The First Baptist Church of Belleville.

In the early 1800's the only Presbyterian minister who visited this city was the Rev. James Gallaher, who arrived at various intervals. But in 1833 the first church was organized by the Rev. J. F. Brooks, to be disbanded, however, in 1837. In 1839, it was reorganized and it is from this beginning that the First Presbyterian Church of today took root.

Its first building stood at the present site of the First Baptist Church, and services were held there until 1844. In November of that year the new church, located on North Illinois street at the corner of East A street, was dedicated. Its basement was used for school purposes, for in the early days schools were conducted in some of the church buildings. In 1860 the church was damaged to the extent of \$100 by fire, but it continued to hold its services there until the present Presbyterian Church was erected in 1873 at a cost of \$20,000.

The cornerstone of this building was laid in July, 1874. The copper box imbedded in it contained a Diamond copy of the Old and New Testament, a shorter Catechism, a historical sketch of the church, the sermon delivered at the time of its removal from the old building, the list of church members, a list of subscribers to the Memorial Fund, the names of the Trustees, the New York Evangelist, which contained

a sketch of the Presbyterian Church in Missouri, local newspapers, specimens of coins and fractional currency of the United States, the program of the cornerstone laying, with names of participating ministers and a statement of Professor L. Swift regarding the "Comet Now in the Heavens." Two years later, in July 1876 the church was dedicated. Its pastor at the time was the Rev. O. S. Thompson. Several years ago the entire church was redecorated and is today one of the outstanding churches in Belleville.

There are three Evangelical churches in Belleville, the St. Paul's Evangelical, the Christ Church Evangelical, and the Trinity Reformed Evangelical.

The former dates back to 1835, when Rev. J. Ries conducted services in the Court House, although it wasn't until 1839 that a constitution was drafted and a regular pastor, the Rev. William Flickinger, was named. He was a graduate of the University at Erlangen and received an annual salary of \$150. The first church stood on a little hill where now the Franklin school stands. That little church, which cost \$413, was used as a place of worship by both Protestants and Catholics, and also as a school. Here also the Saengerbund had its meetings, and it also housed their library. It served in that early day as a sort of community house for the cultured Germans.

St. Paul's Church is sometimes spoken of as the first Protestant church here. However, early records disprove this, showing that there were other Protestant denominations in the field at the same time, and even a little earlier. It is, in all probability the first Protestant church of German language in Southern Illinois.

The original church dates to about 1850, although it continued as a school for some years thereafter. Practically no Evangelical services were held between 1857 and 1859. But then the congregation was reorganized by a few faithful ones who built the present church in 1861 at a cost of \$4,721. The



original church was sold for \$200. In the years that followed more church property has been acquired and many improvements and additions have been made. An imposing \$12,000 parsonage flanks the church on the east, while a spacious hall is on the west. Its membership is constantly increasing, and much of this is due to their popular pastor, the Rev. B. J. Koehler, who has devoted himself unstintingly and tirelessly in promoting the welfare of the church.

Christ Evangelical Church, located at the corner of West A and North Fourteenth streets, was organized in 1893. Rev. Louis Von Rague, its first pastor, charted the church through its difficult first five years. During that period of time the present church was constructed and its Sunday School organized. The first services of the congregation were held on the second floor of what is now Engine House No. 2. In the ensuing years many improvements have been added to the church property, making it one of the outstanding places in the West End. In 1913, a \$10,000 church hall was erected, and in 1928 a modern annex was added.

The Trinity Reformed Evangelical Church, an off-shoot of St. Paul's was organized in the spring of 1934 as a Mission Sunday School, but in the following January, it attained the status of a church. Its first services were conducted in the Community House at the northwest corner of South Charles and East Washington streets. Rev. James V. Ingram was its first pastor. In June, 1936, the congregation purchased the Henry Ehret home at 47 North Douglas avenue, and this newly renovated edifice was dedicated as a church on December 13, 1936, and its religious services have been held there and will continue to be held there until the new church is completed.

It was on March 17, 1861, that Zion Lutheran Church was organized by a group of thirty members, and its services were held in a little chapel on North Jackson street. In 1862 this small group of Lutherans purchased the lot on which the present



church stands, paying \$500 for the same. Here, for \$864, they erected a small building, which served both as a church and a school, for at that time, they had already secured a teacher to undertake the education of their children. The new church flourished and in 1867 a parsonage was erected next to the church.

The congregation soon outgrew the little church and in 1880 it erected the present church building. Its steeple was 128 feet high and it contained two bells. A new organ was also installed and the completed church came to \$10,000. In 1887 the adjoining lot and house east of the church was bought, and the parsonage was moved to it. Some few years ago an attractive new parsonage was erected back of the church and facing North Church street, most of the labor in its construction being donated by members. The Rev. Thomas Spitz is its present pastor.

St. George's Episcopal Church is the only Episcopal church in the city. On February 5, 1880, fourteen Belleville men and women met with the Rev. J. G. Wright of St. Louis to consider the formation of a mission Episcopal church. At the time of its establishment it was known as St. Luke's Mission. Its first meetings were held in a building at North Jackson and A streets. The cornerstone of the present church was laid in the fall of 1882, and on February 21, 1884, the new church was dedicated by the Rev. F. Seymore, Bishop of Springfield. The church was designed by William Hume of New York and was built by C. Daehnert. Its windows are of rolled cathedral glass. Its first organ was a gift of St. Paul's Church in Springfield, Illinois, but in July, 1896, a new one was bought. The church is located at the corner of North High and East D streets. Adjoining it on the east stands the rectory, which was built at a cost of \$3,200 in 1902.

The German Methodist Church, now known as the Jackson Street Methodist Episcopal church, was organized in 1848

by the German Methodists in the community. In 1850 they bought from the English Methodists the little church at the northeast corner of South Third and West Washington streets. Here they met to worship until 1864 when they bought the church and school property of the Rev. Homeier on South Jackson street for \$8,000. This little church had been built in 1858 as an Evangelical church under the Rev. Homeier. The school building was torn down later to make room for the parsonage. The steeple was added in 1865 and the next year the church bell was bought. In 1911 the church was entirely remodeled and furnished at a cost of \$4,000. In 1950 it merged with the First Methodist and is no longer used for services.

#### PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS 1848-1951

The history of the Catholic school system dates back to the year 1848, when the Rev. Casper H. Ostlanbenberg, pastor of the old St. Peter's Church now the Cathedral, established the first Catholic school in the city, a grade school for both boys and girls located on the corner of Third and Harrison streets, which was then, as it is now, the site of the church grounds. This first Catholic church was a frame building costing about \$300 and the school was held in the basement of the church until the new school-house, adjacent to the church, was completed. Here it remained until 1863, when it was moved to another location on Harrison street.

Other Catholic grade schools and the year in which they were established are: St. Luke's, 1881; St. Mary's, 1894; St. Henry's, 1925; Blessed Sacrament, 1926; St. Theresa's, 1926.

During the Civil War days the Immaculate Conception Academy staffed by nuns was established for girls, and later developed into the present Notre Dame Academy. The cornerstone for this high school was laid on July 27, 1924, by the Rt. Rev. H. Althoff, D. D., Bishop of Belleville, and the completed building was dedicated on September 6, 1925. It

was a four-year high school and boarding school for girls and was in charge of the Sisters of Notre Dame.

The Rev. F. H. Budde, pastor of St. Peter's established a school for boys, then known as St. Peter's Institute, which eventually grew into the Cathedral High School of today. The Brothers of Mary began teaching in it in 1905 and have continued so to this day. This four-year high school with an approximate enrollment of 200 boys, is recognized by the Illinois state department, the University of Illinois, and the North-Central Association. The faculty consists of four priests, nine brothers, and one layman.

On August 6, 1926, the cornerstone of a \$50,000 structure for St. Henry's College was laid. It is a preparatory school for young men studying for the priesthood, but includes also other studies in its curricula. On September 13, 1938, LeClerc, a four years liberal arts college, was opened for the women. The teachers in the institution were members of the Sisters of Notre Dame and the Very Rev. Monsignor John J. Fallon was the president of the institution. In 1949 it was discontinued as a college and the building is used today by the students of Notre Dame.

In 1861, the Zion Lutheran Church purchased a lot on the corner of Church and A streets and erected a building to be used for church and school purposes. The Rev. Mangelsdorf was the first pastor of the church and the first teacher of the school. The present Lutheran school is at the Southwest corner of Charles and Washington streets.

There are today nine Catholic and one Lutheran grade schools which have a combined enrollment of approximately fifteen hundred students. The Catholic schools have continued to grow and today include kindergarten, grade, and high schools. Sixty-six sisters and nine brothers instruct the students attending these various schools today.

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS 1825-1951

The first public school in this community was one built at Turkey Hill, but it was only a few years later that Belleville could boast of the beginning of the fine educational system which it has today. Its earliest schools had their beginnings in the travelling schoolmaster, the private school, the subscription school, the church school, and early school associations. Its schools today with their modern buildings and highly trained staffs of teachers have travelled a far way from the one-room schools and poorly educated schoolmasters of the past.

Much of its present educational system is owed to the efforts of two German intellectuals who were forced to flee from their homeland after the unsuccessful revolution in 1833. The first one of these was George Bunsen, who belonged to the liberal class, left Germany and emigrated to America, leaving his mark forever on the local culture.

He had always been interested in education, and when he was a delegate to the State Constitutional Convention in 1847 he tried to establish a state normal school. His ideas, however, were so far in advance of others that his plan was rejected. Nevertheless due to his later efforts, Normal University, at Normal, Illinois, was established.

While on his farm Mr. Bunsen taught his neighbors' children, named Schott and Reuss, and in 1855 he taught his first public school in Shiloh Valley. He didn't remain here very long, for he soon became the country school commissioner, today known as the county superintendent of schools, and moved to Belleville in 1857.

Another of these German educators, Henry Raab, became interested in education after George Bunsen persuaded him to enter the teaching profession. In 1858 he became a teacher in West Belleville, and later, the principal of the Washington School. In 1873 he succeeded Bunsen as city superintendent of schools, and in 1882 was elected state superintendent of

schools. When his term expired in 1886, he returned to Belleville and was appointed city superintendent. In 1890 he was again elected state superintendent, but when this second term expired, he returned to Belleville and retired from active teaching. The high standard of Belleville's public school system today owes much to the foundations laid by these two American pioneers from Germany.

In those early days janitor service was almost unknown, for most schools were serviced by the students, who usually made the fire and did the necessary dusting.

A free school law was enacted in Illinois in 1825, but Belleville did not organize a city school system until later when a better one was enacted in 1855. It was not until April, 1856, that free public schools were opened. In each ward, there was a primary school for boys and girls, and one was also established in West Belleville. Besides there were two grammar schools, one for boys and one for girls. The boys were taught by Messrs. Dennis and Fuller, each receiving a salary of \$450. The girls' department of the grammar school was under the tutorship of Mrs. Charles Edwards and Miss Nancy Hough, the first having an annual salary of \$450, while the latter received \$350 a year. Summer vacations began July 25 and ended August 25. However, the school day was much shorter than it is now. The first high school in St. Clair county was established in Belleville in 1858.

In 1859 a hectic school election was held, with the people having to decide two important questions at the polls. The first of these was whether or not German should be compulsory, and the other was to determine if the regular term should be ten months. The candidates favoring both the German and the long term of school, won the election.

The first official document regarding public schools dates back to 1847, when three school directors were elected. By 1855 the town boasted eleven schoolrooms. However, one gets



a fair idea of school conditions at that time, when the school director's report showed that one teacher had one hundred and fifty-six pupils, and that several of the teachers had no certificates, and that none of them kept records of any kind. In 1855 the total enrollment was 682, and of these 17 students came from out of town. The teaching staff numbered fourteen.

In 1850 the Belleville Literary Society was organized. Its object was, as stated in its by-laws, " . . . the promotion of education, science, and literature, by procuring and furnishing suitable buildings and grounds in the city of Belleville for the use of schools established by the Belleville School Association, and for scientific purposes in general." They issued thirty-seven shares of stock at one hundred dollars per share to the following members: Theodore Krafft, Henry Goedekeing, Joseph Kircher, Philip B. Fouke, Thomas James, D. M. Hopkins, Charles T. Elles, Samuel B. Chandler, William C. Kinney, Edward Abend, Nathaniel Niles, H. Schleth, William Lorey, T. Heberer, John Scheel, Dr. H. D. Berchermann, Taylor and Williams, William H. Underwood, Charles Merck, Theodore Engelmann, Peter Wilding, John Reynolds, Julius Raith, George T. Neu-hoff, Jacob Knoebel, Conrad Borman, J. L. D. Morrison, Edward Tittmann, C. Tittmann, James Affleck, Mace and Heely, Dr. E. Joerg, J. W. Pulliam, Russell Hinckley, Gustav Koerner, and James Shields.

Henry Goedekeing was its president, and Charles T. Elles, its secretary-treasurer. One of the first things they did was to buy the Odd Fellows hall (the present Lincoln Hotel building). Shortly thereafter they rented it to the Belleville School Association for school purposes. However in 1863, wanting to sell the building, they asked the school to vacate, which it finally did in 1867. In February of 1868, Russell Hinckley, Sr., bought the building and converted it into a hotel known as the Hinckley House. Mr. Hinckley paid \$125 for each share of the stock.



It was then that the School Association decided to erect its own school building, but the project was voted down several times, finally passing in 1865. Bonds in the amount of \$94,950, with interest at 10 per cent, were then sold. Thereupon the first Washington School was built in 1865 at a cost of \$40,910.20. The first Franklin School was completed next in 1867 at a cost of \$56,451.34.

West Belleville, although an independent community, nevertheless belonged to the local school district. When Theodore Hilgard laid out that little village he donated Lot 469 to be used for school purposes. Through public subscription, a small school house — The Lincoln — was established, which in 1864 was leased for \$1.00 for 99 years to School District 4, later District 118. This transaction makes the Lincoln School probably the oldest school house in the district. Shortly after the erection of the Washington and the Franklin Schools an addition, costing \$2,316.20 was added to the Lincoln School.

Prior to 1873, the administration of the schools was in the hands of school directors. But in 1873 the first school board was elected. Its members were William Maus, F. J. Staufenbiel, Henry A. Kircher, George Harvey, Henry Brua, and Theodore Krafft.

A liberalizing influence entered the Illinois school system in 1870 when the new state constitution eliminated the word "white" from the school laws, thus assuring Negro children the same education as others.

German influence has contributed much in directing education in the public schools. The kindergarten is definitely a German contribution, and Belleville was one of the first cities in the United States to establish such a system for children of pre-school age.

Earliest mention of kindergartens in the community seems to have been in 1849-1850, when W. Frank and J. Fraus each attempted to conduct one. However, no word of their

success or failure seem to have been recorded. Mr. Fraus married a Miss Marie Boelte, who had a reputation of being a pioneer in the kindergarten development.

The first permanent kindergarten to be established here was a private one. It was in 1874 that the Kindergarten Association was organized with a membership of one hundred fifty local ladies. Mrs. Gustav Koerner was its president; Mrs. William H. Snyder, its vice-president; Mrs. Henry Raab, secretary; and Miss Josephine Bissel, treasurer. The organization issued seventy shares of stock at thirty dollars per share. In April 1875 it was housed in its new \$5,000 building. At that time there were 201 children enrolled and three teachers employed. The average cost per pupil was approximately \$20 per annum. This continued until 1892, when the organization sold its building to the Philharmonic Society.

Again in 1907 another kindergarten association was formed and classes were held in the city council's chamber. It was maintained by the Kindergarten Association until 1915 when it definitely became a part of the regular school system.

The educators of the city, in 1876, pondered over the problem of whether or not to open the public schools for the teaching of an evening course in shorthand, in those days referred to as phonography. About 100 people had applied for admission to such classes. Consequently the question arose, "Is this study of sufficient importance for the city to hire a special teacher to impart this knowledge?" The question was finally settled in the affirmative, and before long, students were given instructions in phonography.

By 1880 the city educational system was comprised of four schools: the Lincoln, which was remodeled in 1865 and is now used as a storehouse; the Washington, erected in 1865; the Franklin, constructed in 1867; and the Bunsen, built in 1879.

Belleville always enjoyed a reputation for cleanliness. This

trait was also made very evident in a decision made by the Board of Education in 1894, decreeing that the basements of two of the schools should be fitted with bathtubs to be used by children found by the truant officer, and others, to be in need of a bath. The boys who needed a bath received their scrubbing under the supervision of the school janitor, and the girls were supervised by the janitress. The bathtub has long since disappeared from the grade school, and the shower has taken its place in some of the later modern school buildings.

Since 1917 a school nurse has been employed and paid a regular salary. Some of her duties are as follows: (1) inspect all pupils in September for symptoms of communicable diseases; (2) visit each school once a week; (3) give each student a sight test; (4) examine teeth and throat; (5) keep a record of each student; (6) make home visits to secure correction of remedial defects; and (7) assist in school dental clinics. The nurse at present is Mrs. Dorothy Nehrkorn.

Of all the people who have been on the school board, John Weber served the longest. He was first elected in 1876 and served continuously until 1904, a period of 28 years. The man who served longest as a president of the board is Henry C. G. Schrader, who was elected in 1931 and retired in 1941, establishing a record of ten years.

During the entire 104 years (1847-1951) of Belleville's public school system, only three women served as members of the school board. Miss Johanna Lorey, a retired teacher, served for a period of two years, 1922 to 1924, and Mrs. Bessie Steingoetter was a member from 1923 to 1937, a period of fourteen years, and Miss Ruth Sterling will have served seven years when her present term expires in 1951.

Excluding the Lincoln School, which today is used for storage purposes, and the Central School, which was razed in 1941, there are nine grade schools. These and the dates of their construction are as follows: (1) Humboldt, 1882; (2) Douglas,

1893; (3) Henry Raab, 1906; (4) Jefferson, 1912; (5) Dewey, 1928; (6) new Bunsen, 1929; (7) new Washington, 1930; (8) new Franklin, 1930; (9) Union, 1939. All of these except the Humbolt and Douglas, are modern and are sturdily constructed and well ventilated. The most modern of these is the Union School, a strictly up-to-date and fireproof building that replaced the old structure which was destroyed by a tornado on March 15, 1938. All the school grounds are well graded and attractively landscaped.

The grade schools include the first six grades and the pre-school kindergartens. The Junior High School, located at the corner of East Lincoln and South Illinois streets, contains grades seven and eight for the entire district.

In all there are 93 teachers and supervisors in the public school system. Its buildings are valued at \$2,280,187, while the valuation of School District 118 is \$77,500,000, and the tax rate is 59 cents.

Work in the Junior High School is departmental and is under the supervision of a competent staff of well-trained teachers. Music and physical education are taught throughout the grades and in Junior High School. In the latter, art, cooking, sewing, and manual training are also taught.

The city superintendents who have served in the public schools since the establishment of the public school system have been George Bunsen, Henry Raab, H. K. Updike, J. K. Light, George Busiek, Oscar Weber, Arthur Odenweller, W. A. Hough, Harold V. Calhoun, L. W. Van Laningham, and Edward L. Allen.

One of the outstanding events of the school year is the School Picnic. It is the day when all work ceases and the entire town observes the occasion. The main event of the picnic is, of course, the school parade that precedes the picnic. Children from all the schools assemble at each one to form the gaily-colored procession that is interspersed with bands and drum

corps. Throngs of spectators line the streets for blocks.

Some classes elected captains to strut along the side of the children in the parade. They wore uniforms with epaulets, and tin swords swung from their belts. There were May queens and flower girls, and the singing of "America" was carefully rehearsed for weeks. Arriving at the Fairgrounds the children gathered around the grandstand where they sang "America" to the accompaniment of the official band. There was no dispersing until this was done.

The line of march in recent years has been East on Main Street from the Public Square to Charles street, counter-march to the Square, west on West Main, then north on Second street to the Franklin School. Here the students are transported on busses to Bellevue Park, the scene of the picnic.

From the minutes of the Board of Education it is evident that the picnic was instituted at a early date, for records of the May 1858 meeting show that June 18 was designated as the first picnic day in which all the pupils of the public schools participated. It was held in the Huff Garden in West Belleville, and has been an annual event ever since. Committees are appointed to make necessary arrangements, which usually consist of the selection of a site, selling of concessions, arrangements for bands, selection of the line of march, and choosing the date.

The earlier school picnics were even more enthusiastically celebrated than have been the later ones, for then, in the horse and buggy days, there was less social competition and present-day restrictions against the sale of beer at the picnic were not in effect.

There formerly was a bar at every school picnic, and a popular place it was. It, of course, did not receive the unanimous approval of the citizens and every year the Women's Christian Temperance Union presented a petition to the school board asking it to dispense with the sale of intoxicants at the picnic. However, the opposition to the bar was of no avail until 1916



when the board finally voted to ban the foamy brew.

Lunches properly labelled, were brought to the grounds free of charge. Many mothers brought the family lunch in huge baskets, usually covered with a large red and white checked tablecloth. There was an ornate merry-go-round, sometimes called the "Flying Dutchman," that went 'round and 'round to the organ tune of "The Last Rose of Summer." In the afternoon teachers would meet their classes at a pre-arranged spot and games such as "Cat and Mouse," "Clap-in, Clap-out," etc. were enjoyed.

Until recently, the picnic was usually held on a Friday in May. If it rained the picnic was postponed to the same day of the following week. However, that has now been changed, and a Wednesday in June is selected.

Such were the picnics of old. Those of today do not differ so greatly from those of yesterday. The merry-go-round is still with us, although its tune has changed. The children still march as they did then, although not to the old Fairgrounds.

In pioneer days it was always hard to pass new educational measures, since our forefathers, in their frugality, voted against new tax levies. As a result of this, many private schools developed. It was not until the end of the Civil War that interest in education received any attention from the public and this period marks the beginning of local high schools. Before that day, public education consisted only of the grade schools, but in some of these a ninth grade was included, and from that grade developed the high school as we know it now.

The high school in Belleville was created by a resolution passed by the Board of Education on February 2, 1858. This high school, such as it was, continued in existence until March 15, 1878, when the board passed another resolution abolishing it because the public still believed that its benefits did not justify its existence. Even though the high school was discontinued, many of the courses continued to be a part of the



curriculum and in 1886 the eighth grade included such subjects as geometry, German, physiology, algebra, physics, botany, and zoology.

In 1888 all the eighth grades, A and B section, were transferred to the new Central School that had just been completed. Here Mr. Klein was the principal and Messrs. Brua, Updike, and Dapprich were the teachers. In September, 1890, the high school was formally opened, and in 1892 the University of Illinois placed it on the accredited list. It was a three-year school, but in 1908 became a full four-year high school.

It remained in this building and under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education of District 118 until the year 1916.

On May 12, 1916, a plan for a new high school, to be erected somewhere in St. Clair Township, was voted on at a special election. By popular vote, the people decided to replace the city high school with a township high school. The new district included all of St. Clair Township, to which most of Belleville belongs. As a result of this election the Township High School Board of Education took over the city high school, but classes continued to meet in the old building until the completion of the new Township High School.

Three sites were offered as possible locations for the school (1) a plot of ground to the east of the city; (2) a plot in the suburbs of Swansea; (3) a plot called Christy Place in the western part of the city. It was put to a vote and the Christy tract was chosen. It contained twenty-six acres lying between West Main street on the north, the Illinois Central Railroad tracks on the south, the Southern Railroad tracks on the west, and within one hundred feet of South Twenty-third street on the east.

On May 16, 1916, the cornerstone for the main building of the new school was formally laid with impressive ceremony. The exercises opened with a prayer by Rev. Highfield and were followed by a speech by Mr. George Niess. In the cornerstone located at the northeast corner of the main building, was

placed a copper box inside of which were placed copies of each of the local newspapers, a history of the organization, a list of the teachers of the school and the school officers, a dollar bill, a half-dollar, a quarter, a dime, a nickel, a penny, and a message for future generations written in pencil on three pages of foolscap paper.

The Main Building was built by Bauer Brothers and the architects were Frank Riester and Otto W. Rubach. It was modeled after the New Trier Township High School at Kenilworth, Illinois, and was completed on February 12, 1917. The dedication ceremony of the completed building was held on June 20 and 21, 1917.

It began on the evening of June 20, with a speech by State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Francis G. Blair. On the afternoon of June 21, a bronze tablet was presented by descendants of four of Belleville's citizens who had been governors of Illinois. The tablet was unveiled by Mrs. Mary Isabella Wickenhauser, a great-granddaughter of Lieutenant Governor William H. Kinney, and by Miss Sylvia Portuondo, a great-granddaughter of Governor William Bissel. Present in the audience at the unveiling were also Mrs. Gustavus A. Koerner, a daughter-in-law of Lieutenant Governor Gustavus A. Koerner, and a granddaughter of Lieutenant Governor Kinney; Mrs. B. H. Ferguson, a granddaughter of Governor Ninian Edwards, and Mrs. August Rombauer, a daughter of Lieutenant Governor Koerner.

The members of the first Township High School Board of Education were as follows: Louis E. Wangelin, president; Rollin M. Hayes, secretary; and David O. Thomas, Andrew Kissel, Charles Lenz, Fred F. Fleischbein, Julius Heinemann, and C. Braunersreuther, board members.

The faculty at the Township High School in 1916 consisted of fifteen teachers headed by H. G. Schmidt, principal, and J. H. Yarbrough, assistant principal. Of the original teachers

remaining today Orena Farmer, Pearl Johnson, F. J. Friedli, and John Karch remain. The other teachers at that time were Elizabeth Beyer, Ludwig Carl, M. G. Humphrey, Maude Kurre, Lester Miner, Henry W. Brua, Estelle Thurston, Grace Bertram, Cordelia Gummersheimer, Jennie Knowles, and Kurt Busiek. In July 1945 Mr. Schmidt as principal was replaced by Dr. Hal O. Hall, while Mr. Fritz Friedli became the assistant principal.

The cafeteria was added in April, 1917, and was placed under the supervision of Mrs. Kathryn Jones, who remained in charge until July, 1949, when she resigned and was succeeded by Miss Jewel Owens. It has a seating capacity of 230 students, and approximately 1800 students and teachers are served there daily during the three lunch periods.

The next buildings added were the present girls gymnasium, in 1919, and the auditorium in 1924. The enrollment increased greatly so that classrooms also had to be added. In the south end of the auditorium are eight rooms available for classes. The north side contains an assembly room seating 1,200, where all plays, some graduation exercises, concerts, and lyceums are held. There the assembly is held for students, faculty, and visitors. The programs are put on by the students unless a lyceum program has been scheduled.

The present girls gymnasium was originally built in 1919 for the boys, but was turned over to the girls when a larger one was completed for the boys in 1937.

The present library building was added in 1936. It is used today for both class and library work. There are ten classrooms on the first floor. The second floor contains five rooms and the study room, which has tables for 350 students and a library of approximately 9,000 volumes and sixty periodicals.

The new boys gymnasium was completed in 1937 and is considered one of the most modern and up-to-date buildings of its kind in the state. It is 140 by 117 feet and has a seating

capacity of 600 people in the permanent seats, 800 in the bleachers, and 1,100 in the telescopic bleachers.

The latest addition to make the Belleville Township High School a million dollar plant is its magnificent stadium located in the rear of the cafeteria. Work was begun on this by the Work Projects Administration (W.P.A.) in March, 1939 and it was completed in April, 1940. It is today the finest stadium in the Southwest Conference, and is one that many colleges would be proud to own.

At the same time that the stadium was built the school also modernized the track and tennis courts. The track is one of the finest, containing a baseball diamond in the center, while the tennis court is an all-weather one of the best construction.

In September 1950, 1330 students enrolled in the local public high school. In October 495 more enrolled for night school, making a grand total of 1825 students enrolled that year. The six massive brick buildings with the half dozen tennis courts, track, and stadium are valued at over \$1,729,700, while that of the district is valued at \$118,000,000.

The seventy-seven members of the faculty teach a total of ninety-four different courses. The high school work is divided into three main divisions: 1. college preparatory; 2. commercial; and 3. industrial.

The average tax rate is forty-six cents, per \$100.00 of assessed valuation, while non-resident students each pay a sum of \$290 tuition.

The high school is approved by the North-Central Association, Illinois University, and the State Department of Education. In September, 1946 a two year junior college offering twenty-seven different courses was added, making Belleville the first in Southern Illinois to have such an institution.

The High School Board today consists of Dr. George E. Meyer, president; Miss Ruth Fincke, secretary; and members, Elmer Peters, Clarence A. Manring, Eugene G. Hepp, Ernst

Stein, Herbert Kaufmann, and Russell Thorne.

Belleville today has sixteen grade schools, the Junior High School, three high schools and one junior college. Its educational facilities rank high and are the best in Southern Illinois. It is a recognized fact that education is the first line of national defense, and as such, it should be extended rather than curtailed.

Horace Mann once said, "A true patriot is known by the interest he takes in the education of the young." Education of youth must not be neglected, nor should it be permitted to suffer any loss of educational opportunity, for our future position in the world depends greatly upon how well the boys and girls are trained. Teachers, as a group, are contributing a noble service to the country.

Although school days constitute only a short span of life, they nevertheless present one with programs for life, making it easier to choose the right career, and helping to better fulfill that career.

By means of well organized instruction in schools, an opportunity is provided to study the principle of right and profitable living. Schools are maintained with this in view. They strive to provide the individual with intelligence to prepare him for better living, to make of him a more efficient worker, to train for leadership, to encourage more intelligent voting, thus making of him the best type of citizen.

Schools are not the only agencies for education, however, for included in these are the church, the home, the library, newspapers, magazines, lyceums, public forums, radio, television, motion pictures, and playgrounds, all of which are educational institutions. The power of the printed page cannot be measured, although there is no doubt that much knowledge can be acquired by contact and conversation with others who are intelligent, either through association, experience or education.

The school group, though, is the largest medium of education. It receives the child at the age of five. It keeps its doors open



to mature adults. It helps to prepare the young people for their responsibility as citizens, which is important because each generation profits through the experience of those of the past.

The creed of the public school is as follows:

I am the guardian of the hopes of every generation, and I am true to my trusts.

In me, all things are equal. In me are no distinctions among those who come to me, except the paramount distinction between those who are proud to serve and those who seek only to be served.

It is my duty not only to teach, but equally to learn; to keep perpetually a light among my altars, kindling it forever afresh from the inextinguishable flame that burns in every young heart—the sacred fires of love of knowledge and love of country; for if I succeed, America succeeds. I am the true democracy. I am the American school.

## THE PUBLIC LIBRARY 1836-1951

The oldest library in Illinois is the Belleville Public Library. It has today (1951) functioned for 115 years, having been organized in 1836.

In the period of rapid German immigration to the Middle West in the early 1820's and 1830's, there came to this area a group of outstanding persons. They were outstanding for their scholarship, culture, and high ideals; all were graduates of and professors at German universities. To them the political oppression in the Germany of that day had become very stiffling, and America with its opportunity for free speech, liberal thinking, and the utter absence of political oppression, appealed to them.

Brilliant reports of the opportunities for scientific farming in this fertile area had reached these men and this was the incentive for them to try farming as a new means of livelihood.



However, in translating themselves from German scholars into American farmers, they held fast to their love of learning and culture. They were known in the surrounding country as "Die Lateiner" or "The Latin Farmers."

They met regularly, usually on Sunday afternoons, for discussion of political, social, and economic questions of the day. It was at one of these meetings held on the farm of Dr. Anton Schott, June 26, 1836, that the idea of a circulating library was conceived. Just at this time there was published a twelve-volume work of "The Life of George Washington" by Jared Sparks, which was expensive and almost prohibitive for individual purchase. The burning desire to explore this work was no doubt the seed which germinated in the mind of Dr. Schott.

At this time he read a paper setting forth the value of an organization of this kind and also showed that each one of the group could pool his own private collection of books into a central collection for the common use of all. He found his audience in a receptive mood and it was agreed to meet again on July 17 of that year.

Fifteen men responded to this invitation and on that day the organization was perfected. The constitution and by-laws were adopted on August 14, and each member of this group of sixteen men subscribed an initiatory fee of \$3.00 in consummation of the plan. Thus the "German Library Society of St. Clair County" was established and has functioned continuously ever since. George Bunsen was its first president; Theodore Hilgard, its first treasurer; and Dr. Anton Schott was appointed the first librarian with the library located in his farm home in Shiloh Valley.

The following sixteen gentlemen were the charter members: Edouard Hilgard, Fritz A. Wold, Fritz Hilgard, Sr., Theo. Engelmann, Theodore Hilgard, Jr., Julius Scheve, Gustav Koerner, Dr. Anton Schott, Herman Wolf, George Bunsen,

Wilhelm Decker, Joseph Ledergerber, Dr. Adolph Reuss, Otto Hilgard, Dr. Adolph Berchermann, and J. C. Hildenbrandt.

After an existence of four weeks the collection numbered 93 volumes and at end of the first year it had grown to 346 volumes. The set of Jared Sparks' "Life of Washington" was purchased and this work of twelve volumes is still on the shelves of the Belleville Public Library. The members donated generously the books from their own individual collections. It is a fine index to the patriotism of these new Americans that a life of George Washington should have become the nucleus of a public library.

A glance at the financial condition in the first year of this infant project is indeed interesting. In the first year twenty-four members paid the initiatory fee of \$3.00, making the total income \$72.00. The expenditures were \$25.50, leaving a balance of \$46.50. The finances were closely guarded; the annual budget, receipts, and expenditures were laid before the general meetings and minutely scrutinized before being adopted. Another example of the foresight of these men was that in April, 1839, they began the creation of a sinking fund of 20 per cent of all receipts toward the erection of a building.

On February 22, 1839, the library was incorporated by the General Assembly of Illinois and the incorporation papers were signed by Gov. Theo. Carlin. One of the striking paragraphs of this charter was Section 4 which says, "Female members of this society shall not be permitted to vote in elections, nor in any other cases."

The library remained in the home of Dr. Schott until March 13, 1853, when it was moved to Belleville. The collection by this time had grown to 1906 volumes, and it was no longer expedient for the members, many of whom lived in Belleville to go a distance of several miles to Shiloh Valley for the exchange of books. A room was provided by the Belleville Literary Society in what was the Odd Fellows' Hall, where the Lincoln Hotel now stands. Later the Odd Fellows' Hall came to be used

as a school building and the library was moved to a room over the store of Goedeking and Kircher, where Mr. Joseph Kircher acted as librarian without pay.

The library remained here until December 16, 1860, when it was combined with the Belleville Saengerbund. The Saengerbund, as the name implies, was an organization for the study of vocal culture, and it also had a collection of books. In order to increase the usefulness of both book collections, it was decided to combine them under the name of "Belleville Saengerbund and Library Society." This consolidation took place in 1860 and a charter was obtained in 1861. Dr. Schott became the first president of this new organization, with Bernhard Wick, Fred Reiss, and Jacob Weingaertner as its board of directors.

Mr. Gustav Kellermann was the new librarian, but was succeeded in 1863 by Mr. Henry Raab, who served until 1883. His son, the late Dr. E. P. Raab, was the assistant librarian, whose duty it was to serve the children at this time. Another noteworthy feature of this period was that in 1873 a rule was made which admitted "ladies to full membership." The library functioned under this plan for 22 years; the book collection made rapid increases and had by this time a collection of 8875 volumes.

In 1883 the Saengerbund, agreeing to dissolve, offered its library to the city of Belleville with the proviso that it must remain forever a free public library and that the city assume its debt of \$1,000. The city was favorably disposed to this and its council passed an ordinance to that effect.

Two men who were among the original founders of the library, lived to see it transferred to the city. They were Gustav Koerner and Theo. J. Kraft. Mr. Koerner became the first president of the board of trustees and remained so until his death 1896. Mr. F. J. Staufenbiel was appointed librarian, and the library was opened free to the public on March 10, 1884

on the second floor of the present Engine House on South Jackson street.

By 1872, the space here had become inadequate and the library board petitioned the city council to permit it to erect a building. This was granted under the able leadership of Mayor Herman G. Weber. The present City Hall on South Illinois street was built by the library board and opened on October 9, 1893, with the city offices on the first floor and the library and reading room on the second. Here a steady advance was made, new methods of administration were introduced, and obsolete ones discarded. The noteworthy thing about this period of the library's history was the splendid cooperation begun with the public schools.

On December 10, 1903, Mr. Staufenbiel passed away after almost twenty years of devoted effort. He was succeeded as librarian by A. M. Wolleson, during whose administration the most important innovation was the opening of a separate children's room in 1906, with an attendant in charge. Childrens rooms were just beginning to be established throughout the country in the late 1890's.

In 1912 the library was again seized with growing pains. The second floor of the City Hall was wholly inadequate. Mr. Curt H. G. Heinfeld, himself the son of a former library trustee and grandson of former Herman G. Weber, under whose administration the City Hall was built, was now the president of the library board. He had opened correspondence with the Carnegie Corporation trying to interest it in donating a new building to the city. He met with many disappointments, and it seemed almost impossible for the city to comply with the necessary requirements set up by the Corporation. However, after many months of patient and persistent effort, Mr. Heinfeld received an affirmative answer. This required, in substance, that if the city would provide a site for the library and pledge itself to appropriate annually not less than the sum of

\$4,500.00 for its maintainance, the Corporation would grant the city the sum of \$45,000 for a new building.

This was agreed to by the city council, and an ordinance was passed setting all future minimum annual appropriations at \$4,500. The preliminary work of planning the building covered many months of work on the part of the library board. The construction was begun on March 1, 1915; the cornerstone was laid on March 22, 1915; and the building was completed and dedicated on January 20, 1916. In February 1919, Mr. A. M. Wolleson resigned and Miss Bella Steuernagel was appointed to succeed him as librarian.

The occuation of the new building in 1916 was no doubt the most important milestone in the history of the library, and since then it has enjoyed its greatest period of activity. Steady and normal progress has been made; as soon as new innovations in library service have developed they have been adopted. Every effort has been made to keep in step with the time.

Among the more important innovations have been: entire recataloguing the book collection, inaugurating a new registration and checkup system, moving the children's room to the ground floor, opening a junior adult department, establishing the West Side Branch Library, introducing classroom collections in the schools, preparing a mounted picture collection, giving free library service to the hospital, and segregating the books on art and music in an art and music room.

That the library has been a good investment for the taxpayer is due to a composite effort, not only of the persons directly responsible for its administration, but also to the splendid response of the community itself, with its spirit of appreciation of what a power good books and library service can be in the community.

In review of this period of a little more than a century, there may be singled out three individuals whose vision and devotion to the cause of library service in Belleville has been most



praiseworthy. They were citizens who were willing to go the second mile, citizens who actually demonstrated a fine conception of good citizenship. The first was that grand old man, Dr. Anton Schott, without whose wisdom, initiative, and intelligent guidance this pioneer adventure would never have been conceived. Gustav Koerner, who through all the years, still remains perhaps our first citizen, and whose devotion of sixty years made the library a thing very near to his heart, was the second. The third was Curt Heinfeldten, whose pre perseverance, persistence, and determination secured a building which might otherwise never have been achieved for many years.

## ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL 1881

On November 3, 1875, three Franciscan Sisters from Muenster, Germany, arrived in Belleville and began a provisional hospital. They occupied a small one-story, two-room brick building on West Garfield street, between Richland (now South Second) and Race (now South Third), on a plot of ground in the rear of the present St. Peter's Cathedral. For many years this hospital was also used for a base and as a home for the sisters.

There was little room in this primitive building, but the sisters made up for this in their zeal to alleviate the suffering of the sick. These three nuns went out on duty calls in their self-sacrificing way and with great devotion, to administer to the best of their ability to the patients of all creeds, color, nationality background, or station in life. Their services were greatly appreciated and resulted eventually in the erection of the nucleus of the present hospital a three-story brick building on the very ground upon which the present modern hospital has been built.

Prior to this time Belleville had no hospital except what was then called the County Poor House for indigent persons. In 1880 a new building was constructed upon the hospital's present



site on the land that had been donated for this purpose by Mr. Huber. On May 22, 1881 the sisters moved into their new hospital.

Shortly after the opening of the hospital it was decided that it should be opened to patients of all creeds and all denominations, and that all reputable physicians having a state licence should be allowed to attend patients there.

Although the hospital was a haven for the sick, the institution was not patronized as it should have been. There was great reluctance on the part of all patients to enter it, partly because the people did not yet realize the advantages of a hospital. Patients were usually treated at home and nursed by one of the family. Only the extremely desperate cases, which members of the family could not handle, were sent to the hospital. Naturally many deaths resulted and the general feeling was wide-spread that entering the hospital was a last resort and was equivalent to being carried out as a corpse.

In 1892 two wings were added. Another wing was added in 1903, and in 1918 the large west wing was constructed. The maternity department was built in 1926 on the third floor of the east end, and so constructed that it is entirely separated from the rest of the hospital. In the same year a new \$200,000 addition was made and all modern equipment was installed. Those in charge of the hospital today are the Sisters of Saint Francis, whose Mother House is in Springfield, Illinois. Dr. August F. Bechtold performed the first operation in the new operating room of St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

The new \$150,000 four-story addition to St. Elizabeth's Hospital was dedicated on July 29, 1928. The Rt. Rev. Bishop Henry Althoff opened the dedication. Rev. Thomas Bowdern, S.J., Dean of the School of Education of St. Louis University, was the principal speaker, while Monsignor M. J. Gruenewald acted as master of ceremonies.

The personnel now consists of 35 nuns, more than 50 nurses,

and 30 general maids. In addition there are the laboratory technicians, X-ray technicians, dieticians, orderlies, office girls, general maids, maintenance men, cooks, laundry help, and others. The first and second floors are for general medical and surgical cases, and the third floor is for the maternity cases. The hospital has four operating rooms, two for clean surgery, one for puss cases, and one for special surgery.

The hospital, as it now stands, is a great credit to the work of the Sisters of St. Francis and to the people of Belleville in general—a dream that finally came true.

In 1933 the old Harrison Machine Shop was remodelled and connected by a corridor with St. Elizabeth hospital and in 1934 part of it became the dormitory of the hospital maids and the rest is used as a garage. It will be torn down when the present hospital is remodeled.

## CHAPTER VIII

# Industry and Labor

EARLY INDUSTRIES 1814-1850

**B**elleville's ideal location in the heart of the great Middle West makes a vast market area accessible to it. Fertile soil and an abundance of raw materials have made this location desirable as a residential district as well as an industrial one.

Of the early industries the mills were the most important for they were real labor savers. Before their day people pounded their corn for bread or grated it into a coarse meal which our forefathers contended produced bread that tasted just as good as if the flour had been made at the mill.

The first mill in this vicinity was built by Elijah Chapman in 1810 and was located on the west bank of the Richland Creek, north of Main street. It was both a water mill and a tread mill. Actually it was this primitive contrivance that gave Belleville its real start as a village. Its first power was a brace of oxen walking on an endless journey on a tread mill. In the spring and fall, when the stream was high, water power was used to grind the corn into meal and the wheat into flour. It had been erected on a most logical location, however, for all the mills, distilleries, and soap factories, depending on water power, were located on that creek.

Another mill was built in 1815 by Moses Quick just south of the St. Clair County Fairgrounds. It was later sold to

Major Washington West, and remained in operation until it was destroyed by high water.

In 1882, Edmund Wilkinson and John Ringgold built a large ox mill on the site of the present R. A. Halbert residence on South High street. This was sold to Jacob Whiteside, who later sold it to Samuel Ogle. In 1826 it was bought by Thomas Harrison and Son who soon thereafter used steam as the motive power. This steam mill was the first of its kind in the state.

The Harrisons, possessing much business ability, made a great success of the mill, which in turn proved to be a great benefit to the entire community, besides providing its owners with an immense fortune. In 1836 it was moved to the north side of Richland Creek and West Main street. The mill burned to the ground in 1884, the fire spreading so rapidly that nothing was saved but a few barrels of wheat. That which had once been the pride of the village, in a few moments was nothing but a mass of ruins, entailing a loss of \$80,000. The mill was rebuilt, but during that time the hundred unemployed millers created a serious relief problem for the community. In 1889 it was incorporated as the Harrison-Switzer Mills and in 1917 it became the J. F. Imbs Milling Company.

That old ox mill and its successors constituted the most important of the early Belleville industries. For more than 150 years it has been located at West Main street and Richland Creek. While not all of the early mills were as famous as the present Imbs Mill, all of them helped to make the city the focal point of attraction to farmers for miles around.

Hinckley's Mill, located on the southeast corner of West Lincoln and South First streets was built by Richard Rapier in 1832, and disposed of by him in 1837. In 1847 Russell Hinckley bought it and operated it continually thereafter until 1890.

The Crown Mill stood on the northeast corner of East Main and Walnut streets, occupying the site of a former small steam

mill, which was operated by a Mr. Meister. One of the best equipped in the state, it was owned by J. F. Imbs, Charles N. Hahn, and Fred Engelke. In the early 1880's its capacity was 600 barrels of flour per day, and at that time it employed more than fifty men. This company was the first in Belleville to take advantage of the telephone.

Another of the very early industries in our community was the distillery built in 1880 by the owner of the leading hotel, an ex-justice of the peace, and ex-jailer, named Tannehill. His farm, mill, and distillery, were mere auxiliaries to his hotel, in that they supplied most of the things it needed. His distillery, one of the largest in Southern Illinois, helped to make his hotel the general headquarters of an indiscriminate admixture of judges, lawyers, jurors, witnesses, politicians, scalawags, and others. Here the entire output of his distillery was consumed and often on public occasions three or four barrels of whiskey were emptied in a single day. It was generally used in its virgin purity—made today and consumed tomorrow—by his wholesale or retail thirsty customers. A few apples, roasted to a rich brown, were put in to the barrel and these gave it a rich brown color. Tannehill's distillery remained in operation until 1830, when it burned to the ground.

Tannehill created a bit of a sensation when he undertook to build a windmill for grinding the grain on his farm. He got the mill to run, but was unable to control its speed for want of a regulator, which he did not know how to build. For the want of this, the entire mill proved a failure.

A storm caused the sails to revolve with such velocity that the runner was thrown some seventy feet and became imbedded in the soil. The momentum of the shaft threw it out of place and it continued to run until it had destroyed all the machinery in the mill. Thus came to an end the first wind-powered mill in this vicinity. Tannehill then resolved to try water power and was more successful with it.

Before 1828, the reaping hook and the sickle were the only means of harvesting wheat. It was then that the cradle came into use. Until then, twenty acres of wheat was considered a large crop for any farmer, for it would take one man twenty days to cut, bind, and shock it, but with the cradle he could do the work in half that time.

Threshing the wheat was still the same process it had been in ancient days. The old flail was colorful but very difficult, for it was little more than a stick, and with it the grain was beaten from the stalks. The only improvement on this was the threshing of grain by the trampling of oxen and horses. The bundles were laid two deep on a circular floor enclosed in a fence. The horses or oxen were then brought in and the ringmaster would drive them round and round until the grain was all threshed out. The straw was then pitched out and the grain heaped in the center. Later came the horse power thresher, which was nothing more than a cylinder built in a strong frame into which the wheat was put. The rear of this was open so that the men could rake out the straw from the grain.

In the late nineteenth century the manufacture of cigars was a leading industry in Belleville. In 1884 the city boasted of eighteen cigar shops in which 125 hands were employed. Statistics showed that in 1883 some 2,770,505 cigars were manufactured locally all of which found a ready market. Owners of these shops were: John Ackermann, John Bux, Albert Bertschinger, August Fernau, Daniel Fischer, Charles Goelitz, Martin Henkemeyer, the Kaemper brothers, Charles Knepelkamp, Henry Krisher, Jacob Magin, Henry Meyer, Henry Nagel, Jacob Scheu, Jr., Henry Viehmann, Nic Wilhelm, John Winkler, and H. R. Willman.

The first tobacco and cigar shop in the city was opened by Aaron Zeiler in 1840 in the first block of West Main street. He manufactured his own brand of cigars but also kept on hand



an assortment of Melle, Principe, Half-Spanish, and Regalia "Segars," all of which were the leading brands of the day.

Later Martin Henkemeyer opened a cigar store one door east of the Public Square on the north side of East Main street. Here he manufactured his famous Henkemeyer cigar which because of its fine quality, soon became known as a very fine smoke. It is still being made by the Mohr brothers, who have maintained its quality and reputation.

As the decade of the 1840's drew to a close, twelve different industries had already located in Belleville. They were turning out some of the finest furniture, best carriages, and strongest wagons, all of which could be purchased at a low price.

The making of whiskey, too, flourished at that time, for a rather extensive steam distillery was producing, on the average, sixteen barrels of whiskey each day. Another one was nearing completion, and it was estimated it would produce twenty barrels a day. A brewery had been built and was supplying the public with eleven different kinds of beer, from the famous London stout down to mere colored water.

In the past as now, breweries played a conspicuous part in Belleville's industrial history, and it was here that the first brewery in Illinois was established, when Jacob Fleischbein opened one in 1832. It was located on the south west corner of the Square where the Highway building now stands.

In 1837 Abram Anderson established one where now the jail is located on West Washington street. In the years that followed others were opened, and by 1860 there were seven in operation. Besides the aforementioned ones, excluding the Fleischbein Brewery, which had ceased to exist, these were: Simon Eimer's Washington Brewery (west side of South Second street between Harrison and Lincoln streets); Fidel Stoelzle's Brewery (northeast corner of West Main and North Third streets); The Heberer Brothers' City Park Brewery (northeast corner of North Second and West A streets); John

Klug's Illinois Brewery (southwest corner of North Second and West A streets); Priester and Villinger's Southern Brewery (in the fourth block on South Charles street); and Philip Neu and Peter Gintz's Brewery (located in West Belleville). In those days the government levied a tax of fifty dollars on all first-grade breweries and a twenty-five dollars tax on all second grade ones. Besides this it collected a dollar for every barrel of beer sold.

Of all of these breweries Simon Eimer's, established in 1846-47, was the largest. It occupied a half-block, and had beer cellars two stories deep. Reputed to be the largest brewery west of the Alleghany mountains, its output was 8,000 barrels per year, much of which was sold as far away as New Orleans.

Fidel Stoelzle started his brewery in 1851 as a maltster, but in 1853 he added the necessary buildings and machinery and began the manufacture of beer. His brewery occupied about a half-block of ground, and the water for its use was pumped by a twelve-horse power engine from a clear spring situated about two blocks away. In the early 1880's its capacity was about 15,000 barrels per annum.

What is now the Star Brewery was organized by Messrs. Neuhoff and Bressler. It was called the Nebraska Brewery, a name given it by someone by reason of the firm's initials, N. B. When Mr. Bressler sold his interest to a Mr. Loeser the firm became known as Neuhoff and Loese. But Neuhoff soon retired, and the next proprietors were Loeser and Fuchs. The latter sold his interest to Hubert Hartmann, and after a time Loeser passed away, and his interests were purchased by Bernhardt Hartmann. The brewery was then known as the Hartmann Brothers Brewery and continued as such until September 1882, when Bernhardt bought out his brother's interest. Its symbol was the star that was used on its bottles. Hence the brewery became the Star Brewery and has remained such even until today.

Today's Western Brewery is the outgrowth of one organized in 1851 by Philip Neu and Peter Gintz, who conducted the business as partners until the death of the latter on August 11, 1873. The present brewery was organized when the interests were taken over by John Kloess, William Brandenburger, Valentine Steg, and Adam Gintz with a paid up capital stock of \$50,000 dollars. One by one these disposed of their stock until February, 1881, Adam Gintz acquired it all, paying \$32,500 dollars for the same. Under him the brewery was greatly improved. He conducted it until August 1898, when he sold the stock for \$118,000 to a Chicago syndicate, which, in turn, disposed of it in April, 1912, to Henry L. Griesedieck, who has conducted the brewery ever since.

## LATER INDUSTRIES, 1850

In 1850, as now, many "shoe string" starts were still possible in business. Today's and yesterday's foundry heads were not financiers, but nearly all of them were sand and clay shovelers with enough initiative and ability, in a favorable economic era, to rise to greater heights. Some of the early foundries were so small that today they could be tucked away in a corner of one of their present storage warehouses. Many of them did not make stoves but various parts for farm implements. When the demand for foundry work increased, such products as mining machines, sinks, and safes were manufactured on a jobbing basis.

Belleville's outstanding industry has undoubtedly been the stove and iron business. In it was invested an enormous capital and then a year's production was gigantic. It brought more people and more wealth to the Belleville community than any other industry.

The first foundry to manufacture stoves was the old Pump and Skein, built in 1873. By 1884 it had grown so large that it was able to manufacture 20,000 gasoline stoves for a single

St. Louis firm. The first large and exclusive stove foundry was the Belleville Stove and Range Company, which was organized in 1885 and was an outgrowth of the Pump and Skein Company. By 1890 it was manufacturing some 27,500 stoves a year.

Other new foundries now began to spring up in various parts of the city, and it was commonly believed there was a great future in this industry. Prior to 1911 some fifty foundries had begun here, but many of them either merged, sold out, or went out of business. There were large jobbing foundries that made many other kinds of stoves besides the cannonball type. Some of the early foundries were: Rogers', 1878; Eagle, 1883; Baker's Stove Works, 1882; Enterprise, 1896; St. Clair, 1890; Excelsior, 1891; Quality, 1903; Oakland, 1905; Orbon, 1902; Roesch, 1907; and Never Break, 1910. In addition to these there are now the Empire, Harmony, Egyptian, Supreme, and Premier.

A typical example of the way some of our foundries have changed names, is that of the Richland Foundry, which was organized in 1902. In 1910 it was known as the Never Break, and today operates as the Karr Foundries.

Philip M. Gundlach has perhaps done more to lighten the task of the tillers of the soil than any other man in this community. His grain drills, the most perfect on the market at the time, were universally used.

Philip Gundlach was born in Germany on July 13, 1831, and eleven years later, in 1842, his parents brought him to the United States. The family landed in New York from where they proceeded to Pittsburgh, remaining there for two months, and then going to Cincinnati. Shortly thereafter on October 12, 1842, they arrived in St. Louis and from there moved to Belleville. Here his father bought a farm near the present city hall but later allowed the payments to lapse when he found a farm much more to his liking one mile east of Belleville. Here he made his permanent home.

His son, Philip, remained with his parents until he was

twenty-four years old. When he married he moved back to Belleville, where he specialized in selling cider made from the apples on his father's farm.

He was of a creative turn of mind, and in his earlier years invented a binder and a thresher, which were manufactured by Cox and Roberts, the forerunners of the Harrison Machine Works. His research did not cease with the threshing machine, for he next devoted his efforts to grain drills. He soon invented one and in 1858 began the manufacture of them in a shop in West Belleville. In 1863 he changed his location to Main and First streets. During the Civil War, when the other firms were being ruined, he continued to prosper, his grain drills contributing much towards the winning of the war.

By 1880 his business had increased to such an extent that larger quarters were necessary, so he built a shop north of town. His business continued to flourish, and with Mr. Severin Poirot as his selling agent, his sales jumped from 250 machines in 1875 to 1500 in 1877. Most of these machines were sold in Kansas, which was then developing into the wheat center of America.

The Gundlach grain drill ranks with the threshing machine and the McCormick Reaper as an important factor in the rapid agricultural development of the Middle West. Here was a vast area of rich agricultural lands, able to produce bountiful crops if only they could be harvested. With too few farm hands to do the work on the thousands and thousands of acres of rich farm land, the cultivating of a farm by one man became a problem. These three inventions were the answer and the old fashioned methods of cultivation and harvesting were now discarded.

In 1847 two strangers, the Messrs. Cox and Roberts, arrived in Belleville, and renting a small frame building near the Harrison Mill, started the building of threshers. These machines could thresh and clean 100 to 150 bushels of grain per day.



They continued in operation until 1855 when Frank Middlecoff and Theophilus Harrison bought out the concern. In 1857 William C. Buchanan purchased an interest, and in 1860 he and Harrison bought the entire interest and it then became known as Harrison and Company. But in 1874, Hugh Harrison and Cyrus Thompson joined the firm, and its name was changed to the Harrison Machine Works under which name it was incorporated in 1878 under the state laws.

The Harrison Machine Works was looked upon as the most important manufacturing establishment, not only in Belleville, but in Southern Illinois. The reputation of its threshers and engines reached all over the country and even into Mexico. It was located on grounds now owned by St. Elizabeth's Hospital just in the rear of that institution. The buildings and yard room covered six acres and in the 80's it employed an average of 200 men. Its capacity of production at the time amounted to six engines and eighteen threshers per week. Although it is still in existence at 1510 East Main street, it is, however, but a small replica of its former self.

There was a time in the past when clothing was spun by women in the American home. There was a later time when clothing was spun in large quantities in woolen factories. Such a one was built by Louis Krimmel in 1848 on the banks of the Richland Creek. Farmers brought their year's crop of wool to the mill where it was carded, spun into yarn, and woven into cloth. Sheep then brought good prices to the farmer. Mr. Krimmel lost his life while trying to cross the swollen Richland Creek on horse back, but his factory continued in operation for some years after his death, and continued to prosper because a frontiersman, Jasper Scott, operated a carding machine here, which helped prepare the wool for the factory.

In 1885 Geiss and Brosius started to manufacture cider mills and double movement grain drills. They sold out to Esler and Ropiquet, who in 1875 organized the Esler and Ropiquet



Manufacturing Company, making grain drills, hay racks, cider and wine mills, presses, and circular wood saws. The factory was located at Main street and Mascoutah avenue.

In 1886 Brosius, Geiss, and Company established the first oil mill that ever existed in Belleville. Its products consisted of castor, linseed, hickory nut, and pecan oils. This was the only place in the United States where pecan oil was manufactured at that time, and it was considered among the finest oils for table use, being considered much superior to olive oil.

Prior to 1882, electricity was used only for street lighting, but that year the Romeiser store installed it for lighting purposes, being the first establishment in Belleville to do so. Power for the same was obtained from the Electric Light and Steam Supply Company, which represented an investment of \$50,000 in capital stock. Thomas Knobeloch was its president and H. Burchardt its secretary and treasurer. Its office was located at the corner of Mascoutah and East Main streets; its boiler house and electric light machines were located in a large brick building which was situated near the palatial residence of Jacob Brosius, later for many years the home of the widow of the late Judge Frank Perrin, and now owned by the Knight of Columbus.

The steam generated by the plant, which was organized in 1879, was used primarily for running the machinery of the Brosius Coal Mine, which adjoined the works, and for the engine of the Brosius, Geiss, Oil Works. In addition, it supplied heat to a few customers in the vicinity. It proved such a success that during the season of 1880-1881, there were about fifty customers being supplied with heat. About 15,000 feet of pipe were used in its distribution, these being laid in insulated boxes so as to prevent any possibility of freezing even in the severest weather.

Belleville was the first city in Illinois to introduce this arrangement of centralized heating, and many churches, halls,

and residences were heated with it. Because of its cheap manufacture, for its coal was obtained right at its door, and with abundant supply of water from the Brosius Lake on the premises, it seemed that a new era was dawning. However, with the perfecting of furnaces for private use, and with unforeseen difficulties presenting themselves, its usefulness passed after a few years, and with it the Electric Light and Steam Supply Company.

Back in the 1880's, Belleville began to experience its first big industrial booms, for with the coming of the nail mills, many new people came to town. They made good wages and spent them, bringing prosperity to the community.

The Belleville Nail Company was located on a five-acre tract in the southwestern part of the city, just across the present Illinois Central Railroad tracks, then known as the Cairo Short Line. It was often referred to as the Waugh Mills for its officers were all members of the Waugh family. Col. James Waugh was its president, W. W. Waugh, vice-president, R. F. Waugh, treasurer, and J. C. Waugh, Jr., secretary. J. J. Carey was superintendent of the plant. Its capital stock was \$100,000. In the manufacture of nails, about 52 tons of iron were used daily, amounting to over 700 kegs per day. It gave employment to some 360 men and boys, and its payroll totalled \$16,000 per month. Comfortable homes were erected in the immediate vicinity by Col. Waugh, for employees, and they were rented for a nominal sum. Prior to moving to Belleville the company was known as the Bogy Nail Co. of St. Louis, but when Col. Waugh had purchased it in 1869 he moved it here.

The Western Nail Mills, with a paid up capital stock of \$50,000 was organized in March, 1882. Its erection was begun on April 15 of that year, and the plant was in operation the following September 4. It was equipped with 42 nail-making machines, whose capacity was 2200 kegs per week. After a year's

operation, the entire plant was destroyed by fire. No time was lost in its rebuilding, for on June 25, 1883, the new factory, enlarged and with its capacity greatly increased, was once more in operation. W. H. Powell was its first president and manager, Conrad Reinecke was vice-president and treasurer, H. L. Powell, secretary, and E. B. Powell, superintendent. Its payroll amounted to \$20,000 per month. Nails ranging from eight inch spikes to small three-quarter inch barrel nails were made. It was located in the northeastern part of the city, and the L. and N. Railroad ran along its warehouse, affording every facility for loading and unloading.

A third, known as the Crescent Nail Mill, was established here by the Belleville Steel and Iron Nail Works in 1865 at a cost of \$60,000. It was located just outside the northern city limits in Swansea. In 1896 it reverted to B. Hartmann, J. M. Hay and Henry Reis, and in 1911 its name was changed to The Hartmann, Hay, Reis Nail Mill. It remained in operation until January, 1917, when it dissolved. Its spacious building was used as a barracks in July, 1917, for 600 Scott Field construction workers.

John A. Day established extensive brickyards on Freeburg Avenue, adjoining Walnut Hill Cemetery. These were later known as the Abend Brickyards and were among the largest in the city.

Others who operated brickyards in Belleville in the past were Gottlieb Zehnert, John Wittauer, Nic Holdener, Philip A. Faulstich, and George Rodemeier.

In about 1880 Anthony Ittner found it necessary to find a new location for his St. Louis Brickyard because of the increased value of land and the encroachment of residential areas. In casting about for a new site where raw material and fuel were plentiful, he finally decided on one north of the city just outside of its limits on the L. and N. Railroad. Here, in 1899, he bought eighty acres of land and erected a modern

dry pressed brick plant capable of making fifty thousand bricks a day.

The plant erected by Ittner was a model of nineteenth century efficiency. In 1894 a second plant for the manufacturing of common building brick was erected on the same property and the last of his St Louis plant was abolished. Here the supply of raw material, namely red brick clay, Illinois joint clay, and shale clay was practically inexhaustible. Here he produced fifteen million face and common bricks, and twenty million hollow tile and hollow bricks per year.

In the operation of the plants 150 men were employed throughout the year, and the pay roll average \$75,000 annually. Twenty thousand tons of coal were used yearly and twenty-five hundred cars of bricks were shipped from Belleville every year. This good business continued until the early part of the twentieth century when improved machinery played such a part that Ittner and his men could not longer compete, and today the firm remains a fair memory in the minds of the older Bellevillians.

The Belleville Glass Company, established in 1882, was bought by Adolphus Busch, president of the Anheuser-Busch Company, in St. Louis, in 1886. He modernized the plant in every respect, employed 258 men regularly, and by 1900 had more than a \$7,000 weekly pay roll and a plant output of more than 200 gross glass bottles per day. They manufactured both green and amber colored glass bottles for beer, mineral water, soda water, wine, and bitters. It was the largest establishment of its kind south of Springfield. In 1920 it was absorbed by the Glass Trust of Newark, Ohio.

One of the oldest grain companies is that owned by the Sehlingers, dealers in grain, hay, flour, and meal feed, with offices and warehouses until recently at 616 East Grant street. Its founder, Anton Sehlinger, was a man who possessed initiative, enthusiasm, and rare business ability. He was born in

Germany and in 1864 settled on a farm three miles east of Belleville. In that year he helped to organize the Emerald Isle Mill, in Mascoutah, and in 1880 he became half owner of it, changing its name to Sehlinger and Schubkegel. Coming to Belleville in 1890, he founded the Sehlinger Grain Company which was discontinued in 1929. Today its successor the Sehlinger Produce Company is operated by Albert Sehlinger.

The Richland Mill, established in 1896, one of Belleville's outstanding business establishments, ranked very high in the production of a high grade flour. It was located on North Second street, and Joseph Dietz was its first president. In 1904, it was bought by John and George Kloess. In 1913, five new concrete elevators with a total capacity of 50,000 bushels of wheat were added, to make possible the holding of the grain when the price was low and selling it when high, thereby increasing the company's profit.

The mill produced flour of both hard and soft wheat. The latter was obtained from local farmers while the hard wheat was shipped in from the Northwest. The last managers of the mill were the two brothers, Arthur and Howard Kloess, who ceased to operate it in 1940.

The Herzler and Henniger Machine Works, which was organized in 1903, was inspired by a demand for mining machinery in the local coal industry. Admirably located at 220 Centerville avenue and the Illinois Central Railroad, it could easily ship its mining machinery, especially hoisting machines, mine cars, screens and loading machinery. Its welfare was definitely tied up with Southern Illinois coal, and since the day for smokeless fuel has arrived, its boom days were definitely over. It, too, has passed on, having been bought by the Gundlach Machine Works, who occupy the building today.



## PRESENT INDUSTRIES

Belleville is fortunate in being located near one of the most important commercial centers of the great West, affording it the advantages of accessible markets for the various products of its farms, gardens, and factories.

With the establishment of factories, new life was installed in the city, which stimulated earnings and promoted a rising standard of living. Where industry flourishes there is no decadence, no poverty, or spiritual death. Many cities, once thriving communities, are now decaying because their industries have moved out of the reach of its inhabitants.

The story of brick making in Belleville, one of its oldest industries, is a most fascinating one. Bricks were first made by hand, then by horsepower, and still later by steam power. Nearly all of the early homes were constructed of Belleville made brick. Generally brick was in such demand for home construction that by 1870 six brickyards were located here. One of the oldest, and operating until recently, is the Kloess Brick Company located at 200 North Twenty-first street, established in 1865. At one time it produced three to four million bricks a year.

Stoves came into use in Belleville in 1837, and soon the demand for them far exceeded the supply. In time local men, seeing a potential market, opened up small foundries for their manufacture. The result was that this work soon dominated Belleville's industrial life. At one time there were 19 foundries located here with a capital investment of \$2,545,000, and employing 1,739 skilled workers with an annual income of \$1,496,330. Coal, gas, and electric ranges; oil and water heaters; coal, gas, oil and electric furnaces were being manufactured and being sent to the four corners of the world.

The Eagle Foundry, one of the largest and most influential, contributed in no small measure to make Belleville an industrial center. It is located at Fourteenth street and the Illinois Central



tracks, and is modern in equipment. Founded by G. D. Klemme and William Schlott in 1883 it was moved to its present location at Fourteenth street and the Illinois Central tracks in 1893. The plant became famous for its "Star" cannon and "St. Louis" box and "O.K." stoves. It was originally established to meet the demand for stove casting, but in 1908 it added an assembly plant, making possible the production of a complete stove. This company uses coke from St. Louis; steel from Granite City, Illinois, and Middletown, Ohio; and sand from Evansville, Indiana.

The plant soon passed into complete control of Gottlieb Klemme who, with his sons, continued to manage it. Maurice G. Klemme became the vice-president and treasurer and has proven to be a man of great business ability. Another son, Alvin H., was made the secretary of the foundry, W. W. Klemme, assistant secretary and treasurer, (while another son, Roland, is today an outstanding brain surgeon and nerve specialist in St. Louis.) In 1950 they sold out to an eastern concern.

The Belleville Stove Works and the Snyder-Baker Foundry were organized in 1885, but the Belleville Stove Works had been previously established as the Belleville Pump and Skein Company. Most of the stove factories organized after 1885 were offshoots from the early foundries or from other factories which produced iron products.

The Oakland Foundry was organized in 1896 by Henry Ehret and was the outgrowth of the Standard Foundry, which Ehret and William Althoff purchased in 1890, when they conducted a plant under the name of Ehret and Althoff until 1892, when Althoff disposed of his stock to Adam Ehret. The firm then took the name of The Ehret Brothers. However, in 1894 it was incorporated under the name of the Enterprise Foundry. Two years later the Ehrets organized the Oakland Foundry which is now located on East "A" street at Florida Avenue. The Oakland Foundry represents an investment of \$440,000,

employs about 325 men and ships products to practically every state in the union.

In May, 1930, the company suffered a \$350,000 loss as a result of a destructive fire. Invitations came in from many cities asking the Ehrets to consider them as new sites, and many offered free plants, free taxes, free power, and other facilities over a period of from five to ten years. The Ehrets, however, were so attached to their native city that they disregarded them all and rebuilt in their home town.

The Excelsior Foundry was established in the southwestern part of town in 1885 by Mr. E. P. Rogers and George B. M. Rogers, and since 1893 has been located at 1200 East "B" street. This plant has steadily increased its volume of business and at present employs 91 men.

The Enterprise Foundry located on "B" street and the L. and N. tracks was established in 1896 and it was one of the most important concerns of the city.

The Orbon Stove Company, originally organized as a nail mill in 1882, was reorganized in 1902 to manufacture stoves. It employs 295 people and has an average weekly pay roll of \$7,000, and its president today is S. D. Vale. Since 1903 it has been located on the L. and N. tracks and Sycamore streets.

The Premier Stove Company was organized by Mr. M. C. Klemme and Arthur C. Krebs in 1912, and today is located at 100 South Sixteenth street.

The Karr Range Company, located at 300 South Seventh street, was organized in 1916 to manufacture and assemble stove castings, but today specializes only in assembling and enameling.

The Egyptian Foundry at Scheel and Hecker streets makes castings but does no assembling. The Lincoln manufactured and assembled stoves, but is now out of business. In 1920, the Supreme began manufacturing on a small scale,

but has grown rapidly since then. The Original Enamel Range Company is now a subsidiary plant of the Supreme Foundry. Through coordination of the two factories a complete stove is produced.

The Roesch Enameling and Manufacturing Co. was organized in 1916, and was equipped in 1938 with modern automatic enameling ovens, so that it is one of the best equipped enameling plants in the city, after pioneering in the enameling process. All of its enamel is produced by the company's exclusive formula whose results have not yet been duplicated.

The Peerless Enamel Products Company was organized in 1938 to meet the increased demand for enameled ranges, and does only enameling work.

The Imbs Milling Company, a combination of the early Harrison Mill, no longer mills for the local market nor does it buy local wheat because the supply is too limited. Instead all of its wheat is bought from the West and its flour is sold to large chain stores. It employs about 70 men on three 8 hour shifts daily. Its capacity is 2000 barrels a day, and its power is steam generated by using local coal. The water is taken from two wells, each 420 feet deep, safe for drinking purposes as well as for boilers.

The Century Brass Works, Inc. had its beginning in our city on July 12, 1917 and has always been located at 1100 North Illinois street. Its president today is R. S. Wangelin and Frederick E. Lutz is its manager. Its products are sold throughout the nation.

The Southern Boiler Works was organized in 1898 to build smoke stacks and repair all types of boilers. Although small, it renders a most valuable service.

After securing a patent for the manufacture of oil and gas-burning metallurgical furnaces, Mr. Arthur Jones organized and established a plant in 1917, known as the U. S. Smelting Furnace Company. These furnaces are of a special metallurgical

construction for the purpose of smelting non-ferrous metals such as brass, copper, and aluminum; and smelting and refining secondary metals.

The well-known contracting company known as Bauer Brothers was organized by Dominic Bauer who was born in Germany April 1, 1863. He arrived in Belleville in 1883 with only 75 cents in his pockets. His first job was loading coal at \$1.50 for a ten hour day, and he had to walk five miles to and from work. After working at this for six months, he secured employment as an apprentice carpenter for Val Reis and Sons at \$4.00 a week. In 1893, he established his own business with Joseph Hilpert as partner. In 1903, Mr. Hilpert sold out to Mr. Bauer's brother, Casper, and from then on the firm was known as Bauer Brothers.

At first it built only homes but later entered the heavy construction field and to date have constructed buildings valued at millions of dollars. Included in this are some of the largest public and private buildings in this area such as: Pleasantview Sanitorium, Scott Field hangar, County Highway Building, Oakland Foundry, additions at the Griesedieck Western Brewery, boys' gymnasium at Belleville Township High School, Union School, Junior High School, Commercial Building, Elks Home, addition to Court House, St. Peter's Cathedral, Belleville Shoe Company, and International Shoe Company.

The Minor Construction Company was organized by Mr. Joseph Minor, who was born here on July 1, 1879, attended the parochial schools, and upon finishing his education became a contractor. He worked at all the different phases of this trade, thereby becoming an expert. He erected many homes and business establishments in this city.

Hoeffken Brothers, the company that is engaged in general road and bridge work and construction work, was organized in 1892. Many of the finest modern highways in this vicinity has been built by it.

Liese Lumber Company was organized by Mr. Julius Liese in 1865. The main yard is today located at 317 East Main street, while a large branch yard is maintained at Twenty-first street and the Old St. Louis Road. It is managed today by Oscar Lippert and his two sons, Howard and Floyd, and employs 45 men.

Beer, wine, and whiskey have been used in this area since an early day. In 1862 the vineyards in and around Belleville totaled fifty acres or more and they produced a yield of 450 gallons of wine per acre.

The most commonly used drink of the early pioneer, besides wines from wild grapes, was whiskey. In 1862, Belleville had eight distilleries in operation at one time. The two largest of these manufactured a brand of whiskey called "Chained Lightning." So potent was it, people contended, that it contained 64 fights to the barrel.

Two of the only four stencil machine factories in the world are located in Belleville. The others are in St. Louis. The Ideal Stencil Machine Company, perhaps the best equipped, receives its castings from the Excelsior Foundry located in the same block. Its annual production is about \$150,000, and it employs 24 people.

The Marsh Stencil Company, located at 707 East "B" street, the last of the four to be organized, was established in 1920. The volume of its business is about the same as that of the Ideal Stencil.

The A. R. Stanley Nail Company, the first of its kind to locate here was established in 1880. A continuation of the early nail mill, it was located in the west end of the city on the east bank of Richland Creek, and was powered by two large steam engines. The mill used 35 tons of iron daily and produced 600 kegs of nails. An artificial lake furnished the water supply and local coal was used to generate the steam. The present plant, located at 1200 East "B" street, and L. and



N. tracks, produces all types of nails, up to 8 penny, various types of metal staples, and hoop fasteners for both wood and paper containers. The capital invested is \$50,000. It employs three men and has a weekly payroll of about \$200.00. Its manager today is Margaret Stanley.

The Belleville Pattern and Match Plate Company, located at 18 South Twelfth street, was organized in 1919 to supply the many patterns needed for the manufacturing of castings in the iron and steel factories in Belleville and nearby cities.

The Streck Brothers Packing Plant, located at 401 West Washington street, was founded in 1915 by three brothers, Clarence, Ernest, and Joseph with a capital of \$300,000. At first they rented a small building where they opened a meat market which became so prosperous that in 1918 they opened a second one, and in 1922 they bought a small plant in which to do their own killing. Their success inspired them to enter the packing business.

Besides having a building for meat cutting, smoking, curing, and cooling, and one for slaughtering purposes, they have a second building for the manufacture of meat products, rendering of lard, and an additional curing cellar. A garage, engine room, office, and a new killing floor have been added. The plant today is large, strictly sanitary, and has ideal working conditions for its employees. In 1931 a rendering plant outside of the city to manufacture by-products was erected. In 1934 the Streckes sold their retail meat markets and are now engaged in the packing business only.

The original Henkemeyer cigar factory was taken over by Peter Mohr, who in 1902 moved his place of business to 24 Public Square. Mohr died in 1919 and his two sons, Robert and Edward, carried on. In 1937 they moved the shop to 707 North Illinois street, and Ed Mohr became the sole owner. Today the famous Mohr and Henkemeyer cigars are sold wholesale.

In 1906 more cigars were manufactured here than in any



other city in the Belleville-Cairo revenue district.

On April 20, 1900, the Belleville Shoe Factory was organized. Its capital stock was \$10,000, and the directors were W. L. Desnoyers, Ed. H. Wangelin, George W. Detharding, H. J. Fink, Adam Jung, I. H. Wangelin, and Phillip Knapp. On October 21, 1904, it was incorporated by C. H. Leunig, Adolph Knobeloch, and William Weidmann.

The Charles Meyer Pants Company was established in 1905 at South First and Harrison streets. The company now employs 50 men and 280 women with an average weekly pay roll of \$12,000. The first building in its present plant was erected in 1923, and an addition was made in 1926 which doubled its capacity. In 1935 another three story addition was built, which practically tripled the original capacity.

The Belleville Bill Posting Company, now the J. Knox Montgomery Advertising company was founded in 1906, with its headquarters at 3400 West Main street.

The G. S. Suppiger Canning Company, canning tomatoes and other vegetable products, was established in 1927 and is a branch of the Collinsville Tomato Canning Company. Nearby farmers produce most of the vegetables for the factory, which, during the rush season, employs about two hundred workers. It was damaged by the tornado on March 15, 1938, but has been rebuilt bigger and better than before. In 1950 it was leased to Krey Packing Company, and all local tomatoes are today canned in the Collinsville plant.

The oldest farm implement company here is the J. I. Case Company, whose business is vitally important to the farmers of this community. The Case Company, founded in 1842, first built and sold threshers and later entered the farm tool field in general. Its local representative is Hugh Edwards, who is now located on the Old St. Louis road, after beginning his business without any capital in 1937. Other similar retail establishments are the International Harvester Company, on Mas-

coutah avenue, managed by Mr. Ellar Daab; the John Deere Company, called the Quality Farm Equipment Company, located on East "A" street and managed by Melvin Timmermann, Festus Becker, and Terrel Dungey; the Allis Chalmers Company on North High street, managed by Mr. Arthur Schmidt; and the Minneapolis-Moline Company on the Old St. Louis Road and South Fifty-ninth street, represented by Cyril Voellinger.

A new dress plant was established locally through the efforts of the Civic Investment Trust Association. It employs a minimum of 150 and a maximum of 400 girls, with an estimated pay roll of \$300,000 a year. It is located in the plant of the old Belleville Stove Works, which was remodeled by the Civic Investment Trust Association. The managers are Ed. F. Keefer, Arnold Salzenstein, S. S. Rosenberg, and A. L. Cohen.

The Belleville Casket Company was organized in September, 1919, by Dr. Edward R. Houston, James H. Land, and Leonard Schmidt. In September, 1919, William J. Bien was added as secretary, and since January, 1923, has been the president of the company. Edgar G. Fritz is today the first vice-president; Clem J. Hartmann, second vice-president; and Ruth A. Sterling, is the secretary and general manager. The company today employs a total of 42 workers, ranks among the 25 largest in the United States, and sells its product throughout the Middle West. It is capitalized at \$25,000, represents an investment of \$250,000 and maintains a display room at 115 East "B" street and another at 4219 Laclede avenue in St. Louis.

The Eddy Paper Corporation, a manufacturer of corrugated and solid fibre shipping containers, is an Illinois corporation, the successor of the Eddy Paper Company, a Michigan corporation, was incorporated in November, 1922. The officers of the Illinois corporation are J. W. Kieckhefer, president; Anthony Haines, vice-president; R. C. Meier, treasurer; and W. F. Kieckhefer, secretary.

The Michigan Corporation, its predecessor, was started in 1906. Henry Eddy of Kalamazoo and Three Rivers, Michigan, was the founder.

In 1922 a re-organization was made, with the Illinois corporation acquiring the properties of the Eddy Paper Company of Michigan, and in 1927 the Kieckhefer interests assumed management of the company.

The Belleville plant, built in 1948, has an area of 90,000 square feet and is located at Otto and Sahlander streets. It has a capacity of approximately 1400 tons per month, which means that approximately 1400 tons of paper can be converted into shipping containers in that time. Harvey E. Moore, is resident manager; Robert E. Washburn, office manager; Dean H. Jones, sales-service manager; and Hubert S. Munson, superintendent. At the present time this plant employs seventy persons in its factory and 15 in the office.

One of the largest manufacturers of monuments in this region is the Tisch Monument Works, founded by Theodore Tisch in 1877. Walter P. Tisch, Sr., his son, is the present manager, while his son Waldo is associated with him. The business is located at both Third and West A streets and 9041 West Main street.

The Adolph H. Honer Monument Works, located at 829 South Illinois street, is owned and operated by Mr. Honer, who has been in this business practically all his life.

Belleville's products, both agricultural and industrial, find a steady market in St. Louis. Commercial vegetable gardening is practiced to a large extent and such produce as sweet corn, horseradish, tomatoes, lettuce, potatoes, spinach, cabbage, asparagus, watermelon, cantaloupes, and smaller fruits comprise the principal garden products.

More wheat and potatoes are produced in St. Clair County than in any other in Illinois. Crops grown and sold are wheat, corn, oats, alfalfa, red clover, sweet clover, Irish potatoes, and sweet potatoes. Pork, beef, poultry, and dairy products also

are well represented.

One vegetable, the asparagus, has given Belleville nationwide fame. Conditions for growing a very fine variety of white asparagus are most favorable here, and the demand for it exceeds the supply. Belleville asparagus is featured on the menus of leading hotels throughout the country. The Goetz farm on the Freeburg road is especially famous for this product.

The financial status of a community is an index of its ability to engage in industrial activity and a determination of its buying power. Local industries are financed almost wholly by local capital. Deposits in Belleville's four banks, which total more than \$10,000,000, reflect sound business practices and fair wages. The resources of its six building and loan associations total more than \$4,000,000. Local capital invested in its industries represents some \$6,000,000.

In 1940, there were 47 manufacturing establishments, the leading one being the stove industries. The products of plants are stoves, cigars, beer, caskets, millwork, containers, dyes, machine work, stencil machines, shoes, flour, paints, boilers, tacks, tools, canned goods, and artificial stone.

During the World War II boom our industries received approximately \$1,374,812 in defense work, exclusive of additional Scott Field work which was estimated at \$18,000,000.

A very active Chamber of Commerce is constantly interested in promoting the welfare of the local industries. Its officers in 1951 were: Wesley Bloomer, president; Louis Saeger, first vice-president; Al C. Schwesig, second vice-president; Wilfred Holle, treasurer; Walter Wagner, executive vice-president; Lois Heublein and Betty Kniepman, secretary and stenographers.

Belleville's Civic Investment Trust Association, with a capital of \$100,000 was formed to find jobs, to increase industrial markets and retail sales, and to stabilize production, payrolls, agricultural income, and real estate values.

Three railroads, the Illinois Central, the Louisville and Nash-

ville, and the Southern, serve the city, which had, until recently, connections with the Alton and Southern, and the Belleville and East St. Louis Electric Railway switch lines.

Belleville's trading area extends seven miles west, thirty miles east, eight miles north, and forty miles south. The population in this area is 75,000, of which 32,000 are within the city limits. In its industries 2792 workers, who are strongly united in the affiliated unions of the American Federation of Labor, are employed.

Today's major industries employing fifty men or more, their dates of organization and present managers are as follows:

1837	J. F. Imbs Milling Co.	R. F. Imbs
1851	Griesedieck-Western Brewery	Ed. D. Jones
1854	Star Peerless Brewery Co.	A. C. Fischer
1878	Excelsior Foundry Co.	Eddy Rogers
1883	Eagle Foundry Co.	M. G. Klemme
1885	Harmony Foundry Co.	Leo. Filstead
1890	Enterprise Foundry Co.	Eugene Klein
1898	International Shoe Co.	J. J. Fox
1902	Orbon Stove Co.	I. J. Leopold
1904	Belleville Shoe Mfg. Co.	Walter Weidmann
1905	Oakland Foundry Co.	King Ehret
1906	Meyer, Charles and Co.	Ben Fox
1906	St. Clair Ice Co.	Karl Pflanz
1910	Century Brass Works	Fred Lutz
1911	Ideal Stencil Machine Co.	Clarence E. Rapp
1912	Premier Stove Co.	O. W. Wegener
1916	Roesch Enamel Range Co.	Henry Oesterle
1916	Karr Range Co.	Ed. Karr
1917	Streck Brothers	Clarence Streck
1918	Belleville Casket Co.	William J. Bien
1920	Supreme Foundry Co.	Edw. P. Karr
1920	Marsh Stencil Machine Co.	Walt Marsh
1928	Peerless Enamel Products Co.	R. G. Willman

1932	Empire Stove	Edw. Kaufman
1941	Princess Peggy, Inc., Items Div.	J. Edw. Vinning
1949	Reynolds Spring Co.	Don Munn
1949	Eddy Paper Corp.	Harvey Moore
1950	Krey Packing Co.	Jos. Williams

The smaller, but active ones, are as follows:

Acme Pattern Co.	33 Grand
A. H. Honer Monument Works	829 South Illinois
Beck Cigar and Tobacco Co.	123 North Illinois
Bauer Bros. Construction Co.	424 Lebanon
Belleville Awning Co.	200 North Jackson
Belleville Crate Co.	South 23rd
Belleville Sheet Metal Co.	820 West "A"
Dresel-Betz Co.	East Main and Florida
Egyptian Foundry Co.	Ben Hemmer
Excelsior Foundry Co.	1200 East "B"
General Magnesium	612 South Third
Germ-Elim Co.	1127 East "B"
Gundlach Machine Works	Centerville Ave.
Harrison Machine Works	1500 East Main
Joseph Magin Cigar Co.	221 East Main
Original Enamel Range Co.	Lebanon Road
Qualified Range Co.	C. A. Tickenor
Quality Plating Works	1651 North Charles
Southern Boiler Works	215 West Adams
Stanley Nail Works	1200 East "B"
Specialty Tool Manufacturers	720 South Illinois
Swansea Stone Works	Caseyville Road
Tisch Monument Works	North Third and "A"
U. S. Smelting Furnace	1200 West "A"

## BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS

Karl Merck, Sr., was born in Germany, arrived in this country in 1835 and opened his first bakery in that year in



the 200 block of South Illinois street. A few years later he moved to 24 West Main street, where the bakery is still located, and where his son Charles later assumed control.

Feickert's Bakery is among the oldest in the city, having been established in 1851 by Christian A. Feickert at its present location. Feickert emigrated to America in 1836, coming directly to Belleville from Prussia, where he was born in 1819. Before starting the bakery he was employed as an engineer in the old Hinckley mill. In 1882 he bought the old jail, which adjoined his bakery property, from the city. After his death the business was successfully conducted by his son, C. Arthur Feickert. Today this modern and up-to-date bakery is owned and managed by Carl Ruffing.

Albert Buechler, another native German, settled in Belleville in 1858 where he was employed by Fred Rupp, then publisher of the *Belleviller Zeitung*, a German newspaper. In 1872 he secured employment with the Omaha, Nebraska, Herald, working later in leading printing houses in St. Louis. His second son, Joseph N. Buechler, founded the printing company that today bears his name, and has been active in this for 48 years. In 1910 he purchased the property at 322 West Main street, his present location, and today has one of the best equipped offices in Southern Illinois.

The Record Printing and Advertising Company of today is the continuation of a printing business established in 1847. George Semmelroth, a native German, entered the partnership in 1858, at which time a weekly German newspaper was published. At his death the *Belleviller Post & Zeitung* was published by his sons, Herman and August. Later the business was changed to a commercial printing and jobbing company, and operated by Herman's sons, Arthur and Norman Semmelroth.

Before the advent of the automobile, the horse and mule

business, as well as carriage manufacturing, were among the city's most flourishing enterprises. The Baer Brothers firm, dealers in horses and mules, was established in 1866. It was originally known as Loewenstein and Baer. In 1886 the Baers, Aaron and Amson, bought Loewenstein's interest, and thereafter conducted the business as the Baer Brothers. David Baer, son of Aaron, joined the firm in 1895, acquiring Amson's share after the latter's death. Later Lee, son of Aaron, also became associated with the business. Although they sell horses, their speciality was mule selling, having at one time supplied most of the coal mines with these. Their location was at 314 North High street.

Wolfort and Company, located at 200 North High street, are similar dealers. They were organized in 1869 under the name of Meyer, Neuburger, and Wolfort. Later the first two disposed of their interests to Leopold Wohlgemuth, and for some years the business was conducted as Wolfort and Wohlgemuth. In 1894, Philip Wolfort, one of the original founders died, and his heirs, buying out Wohlgemuth, have conducted the business ever since under its present name.

Outstanding in Belleville's industrial life in the earlier days were its carriage factories, and the town boasted of several. First of these to be established here was the Volney L. Williams Carriage Works, which was established at the southeast corner of West Main and Third streets in 1837. Later it was conducted by his son Henry Williams, who moved it on East "A" street, between High and Jackson streets, the site where the Wagner Garage now stands.

The Heinzelman Brothers Carriage Works, founded in 1857 by John A. Heinzelman and Henry Timken (of roller bearing fame), occupied the building now used by the Belleville Casket Company at the intersection of North Jackson and East "B" streets. In 1866 it was taken over by Heinzelman's sons, John Jr., and William, who managed it until July, 1892, when

John's sons William, Reginald, and Fred took it over, and they in turn operated it until 1917. During the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, they received eight awards for their exhibits.

Before the turn of the century, and for some years before, at the corner of North Jackson and East "A" streets, stood the Merker, Wirsing, and Hertel Carriage Works, organized in 1883 by William R. Merker, Adam Wirsing and Adolph Hertel. Most of its production consisted of phaetons, surreys, park wagons, carriages, and spring wagons, in fact everything made in the line of horse-drawn vehicles.

In 1878 the Novelty Carriage Works was organized and operated by Gustave Ludwig, Ludwig Beck, and Joseph Stegmayer. Their location was the original location of the Volney Williams shop. Later it was conducted by Ludwig and Stegmayer, and finally only by Ludwig.

Until the day of the chain store, the William Eckhardt Grocery was for many years the largest and most complete business of its kind in this area. Its founder was a musician who had started his career as a druggist. In 1867, he established the grocery business that carried his name, at 104-108 West Main street, where for many years after Mr. Eckhardt's death, it was conducted by his sons Max and Erwin Eckhardt. Later it was located at 124 West Main street. In 1945 he sold the building to Howard Kloess who conducted the Vitality Feed Store there.

There are four first-class undertaking establishments in Belleville today. They are as follows. Pete Gaerdner, located at 250 Lebanon avenue; Renner, Geminn, at East "B" and North Illinois streets; Gundlach and Company on East "A" and North High streets; and the Bux Funeral Home at 3500 West Main street.

The town's leading florists are Grossart Sons on East Main street, established by Gustav Grossart and carried on by his sons, Arno and Fred. The other is the Klamm Florist on Scheel

street, founded and managed by Irvin Klamm today. Two others are John Miller, 127 Mascoutah avenue, and Matt Schoenenberger Florist, managed at present by Irvin G. Krumrich, 811 West "E" street.

The Belleville Commercial College had been for many years a household word, for most local businessmen have received some of their education in this institution. Its founder was Joseph Foeller who opened his first school on August 1, 1893, at 18 East Main street above the old Savings Bank. Arthur J. Foeller succeeded his father in 1914. In 1943, after his death, his sister Adel Foeller continued the school until about 1945 when it closed its doors.

Among the leading bakeries are the Home Bakery, established by John Wilbert in 1896, the Seifferth, Merck, Phil Stetzner's, Schneider, and Feickert Bakery.

On June 18, 1900, the Kinloch Company began the installation of a telephone system and opened it to the public in November of that year. The Bell Telephone of Missouri had already been established here since 1882, when the city council granted it the privilege to maintain and operate an exchange. The Bell system has, since August 15, 1924, bought out the Kinloch and has the entire field to itself. Service today is given by the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company, a subsidiary of the American Telephone and Telegraph. It operates both local and long-distance switchboards, and, at the present time, has about 14,500 telephones installed. Its growth has been very rapid and its service excellent.

In June, 1895, the city of Belleville contracted with the Bell Telephone Company for the installation of 21 telephones which were placed in different city wards at a rental of \$25 per year. In February, 1896, the city council passed an ordinance granting a franchise to W. J. Kurtz to construct and maintain a private telephone system in Belleville. The rates were 25 cents per week for private or residential telephones and 50

cents per week for business houses. This ordinance provided also for furnishing telephones to the city free of charge, for the police and for fire alarms.

Mr. Frank Sadorf, founder of the Paris Cleaning Establishment, first permanent establishment of its kind to have been established here, was born in Austria on September 12, 1875, and left that country to seek his fortune in the New World. He settled first in St. Louis, working there for a former Austrian schoolmate named Lungstras, who owned the largest cleaning establishment in that city. He remained with him for three years, and in 1906, while visiting in Belleville, decided to establish a business of his own. The first location was where the Cook Paint Store now is, but in 1920 he bought the present location at 309 East Main street. It continued to be managed and owned by his two sons, Frank and Matthew, but in 1950 they sold out to the Klyne brothers. The Paris Cleaner and Dyers is a business that is fulfilling a vital need in the city.

The firm Julleis and Son Feed Mill, located at Centerville and Eighth streets was established in 1905 by Herman Julleis and his two sons, Herman and Joseph.

The St. Clair Ice Company, located at 721 West Main street, just west of Richland Creek, was established in 1908, and became incorporated in 1927. Water is taken from a well 462 feet deep and is blended with city water and aerated before going into the plant for the manufacture of ice. It is under the management of Karl Pflanz, and it operates continually, producing 50.8 tons of ice daily, all of which is consumed locally. In 1939 a modern locker plant containing 1000 lockers was added.

Peter Fellner, late president of the Fellner-Ratheim Dry Goods Store was born in Germany, April 18, 1868. Leaving there on February 28, 1893, he came to Belleville where he found employment with Kanzler Brothers Grocery and Dry Goods Store on North Illinois street. On October 15, 1898,



he accepted a position with the Horn and Rodenheiser Dry Goods Company, which he and his partner, Paul Ratheim, eventually bought out, forming the present dry goods firm. He died in October 1941.

Prior to 1852, Belleville's banking history is vague, and little of a definite nature has been recorded. But in that year Russel Hinckley established his private banking institution, and until its failure it was the leading bank in the community. It was located on the present site of the First National Bank, occupying a building erected in approximately 1839 for the Illinois State Bank. This one-story building was razed in 1896 to make way for the present bank structure.

Besides the Hinckley bank failure, Belleville's history records three others. The Bank of Belleville, established in 1855 by Bogy, Miltenburg, and Company, which was located in the old Thomas House, failed in 1858. Although the loss was partially attributed to the lessened value of bank bills, it was due largely to fraud, and its president was indicted for swindle.

The People's Bank, organized in 1869 with quarters in the old Belleville House, closed its doors on April 22, 1878, attributing its failure largely to the failure of the Belleville Nail Mill.

More recently the Belleville Bank and Trust Company, organized in 1903, an outstanding institution during its life time, closed its doors on January 27, 1938, the misappropriation of funds by its cashier showing a shortage of more than \$100,000.

The Belleville Savings Bank is today not only the oldest in the city, but the third oldest in the state. It was organized on February 20, 1859. Until 1869, it was known as the St. Clair Savings and Insurance Company, but after discontinuing the insurance business it adopted its present name. The original bank was located in the Neuhoﬀ Building, a few doors west of the Public Square on the south side of West Main street. In



1865 it moved to East Main street, at first occupying the adjoining building west of its present location.

At the present Belleville has four banks, the First National, the St. Clair National, the Belleville Savings and the Belleville National. The combined capital and surplus is more than \$1,-427,500.00, and the total resources more than \$15,000,000.

The First National Bank, established in 1874 and at present the largest in the city, was the first to join the Federal Reserve System in 1914 and establish the savings account feature.

On October 15, 1919, the St. Clair National Bank was opened for business with a capital of \$150,000.00 and a paid surplus of \$30,000.00. The officers at the time were William Reichert, Frank Gundlach, and Arthur Eidman.

The Belleville National Bank was organized on March 28, 1928, with a capital stock of \$100,000. Among those prominent in its progress were John Wilbert, Carl Tritt, Joseph Minor, Walter Freudenberg, A. T. Sprich, P. C. Otwell, F. A. Keiner, L. R. McKinley, Harrison Schmisser, Harvey Lippert, August Eschman, Otto Neuhaus, E. C. Eidman, Richard Schramm, Dr. S. W. McKelvey, Lee Grandcolas and William Schmisser. All these banks at the present time have first-class ratings, have shown a steady growth, are conservative, and have given the city splendid service.

The darkness ruled with very little opposition when night fell in the young city. The unimproved streets were dark and treacherous, especially on rainy, stormy nights. It was, therefore, with much enthusiasm that the people welcomed the coming of the gas lamp in 1856. Even though it cast a weak and flickering light, the three cast iron lamp posts erected in each of the city blocks were a big improvement.

The illuminating agent used in these street lights was a coal gas manufactured by the Belleville Gas and Coke Company plant located on Richland Creek where today the electric distributing

station stands. It was a local stock company capitalized at \$75,000. This company laid over five miles of main pipe under the streets and installed 152 street lamps. Other streets too were illuminated, and in 1880 the gasoline light, a new type of illumination was tried out on Church street. In 1882, the electric light, the marvel of the age, was introduced in the city, which was now so well lighted that a flock of geese migrating south, flew over the city on the night of November 2, 1882, the first night that the lights were on and became so blinded and confused that they landed in the town. The night, heavy with clouds and moisture, caused the lights to be reflected so as to illuminate every nook and corner confusing the geese to whom it must have seemed that there was one patch of daylight in the darkened night.

Belleville is supplied with enough electric power today to meet almost any demand. It is furnished by the Illinois Power Company through its Cahokia plant in East St. Louis and Venice, Illinois, and is transmitted by power lines carrying 66,000 volts.

Belleville had 36 wholesale establishments in 1939 that did \$3,358,000 worth of business that year. Its employees received a total payroll of \$176,000.

Perhaps the largest sales at that time in any one line of business were those in petroleum products, which totaled \$1,085,000 and had a pay roll of \$53,000 for 29 employees.

In 1850 the following number of businesses, industries, and professions were located in Belleville: 6 hotels, 12 dry good stores, 23 groceries, 4 drug stores, 8 doctors, 3 saddle shops, 12 boot and shoe makers, 8 cabinet makers, 9 wagon makers, 3 chair makers, 10 copper shops, 17 carpenter shops, 11 blacksmiths, 4 bakers, 1 iron stove, 1 pill factory, 4 plasterers, 4 painters, 4 tinner, 7 schools, 9 tailors, 12 lawyers, 2 barber shops, 1 plow maker, 3 soap factories, 6 butchers, 1 carding mill, 2 silver smiths, 2 flour mills, 3 breweries, 1 threshing

machine factory, 2 tanning yards, and 1 woolen factory.

By 1939 there were 5 beer, wine, and liquor firms that had a yearly sale of \$610,000. There were three general line groceries whose sales totaled \$536,000 yearly. Six building and loan associations, namely, the Belleville Security, Citizens, First Mutual, Greater Belleville, Home, and West Side, whose total resources amount to \$3,198,526, do business in Belleville.

The following business establishments reflect the growth of our city today.

A and L Woodcraft Shop	720 West Adams
Belleville Bottling Co.	209 North Illinois
Belleville Dairy	824 Centerville
Belleville St. Louis Coach Co.	Public Square
Berger, Ben Contractor	300 West Monroe
Biebel Roofing Co.	503 West Main
Bien and Peter	123 South 16th
Blust, Fred Co.	Westhaven Place
Bonnelle, Tony Co.	600 Lebanon
Brutto, Syl, Coal Hauling	6400 West Main
Buesch Nurseries	36 Orchard Drive
Building Products Corp.	Freeburg Avenue
Coca Cola Bottling Co.	Forty-sixth and Belt
Commercial Garage	South Twentieth and I. C. RR
Culligan Soft Water Service	111 West "A"
Daesch, E. A.	728 State
Dahm Plumbing and Heating	11th and West "C"
Dr. Pepper Bottling Co.	1901 West Main
East St. Louis and Interurban Water Co.	100 North Illinois
Ebel, Irvin O, Plumbing and Heating Co.	310 State
Evans Tree Service	1305 Schilling
Fat's Express	501 South Second
Feickert Bakery	101 North Illinois
Flach, Paul E. Contractor	6520 West Main
Frick, L. C. Service Co.	303 West Main

Fruth Motor Truck Service	216 East "B"
Geissler Roofing Co., Inc.	606 South First
General Welding Supply	115 North Illinois
Gooding Truck Service	801 Scheel
Gundlach, P. M. Sons	1400 North Illinois
Hechenberger, Herman	1121 North Church
Hessler, F. J. and Son	19 North Thirteenth
Hoeffken Brothers Supply and Construction Co.	222 West "B"
Holland Furnace Co.	14 Market Square
Home-Brite Lumber Co.	1600 North Illinois
Home Modernizing	2701 Old St. Louis Road
Hug Brothers	225 East Washington
Hy-Grade Foundry Co.	409 Dewey
Illinois Power Co.	27 North Illinois
Kehrer Bros. Excavating Co.	Schilling
Keil Tin Shop	301 North Illinois
Kettler Tool and Die Shop	15a Florida
Kloess Brick Co.	200 North Twenty-First
Kloess Contracting Co.	2615 West Main
Ladewig, Ernest	3520 West "A"
Liese Lumber Co.	319 East Main
Lipe, Claude	409 South Twenty-second
Lippert, Harvey and Son	906 Centerville
M. and S. Transfer Co.	800 Abend
Mager, Frank	821 Union
Mager, Wib L. Supply Co.	North Thirty-eighth
Mellon, E. W. and Son	301 South Second
Merck Bakery Co.	24 West Main
Midwestern Butane Co.	432 South First
Minor Construction Co.	709 St. Clair
Mohr Cigar Co.	707 North Illinois
Neff Construction	309 South Sixteenth
Nehi Bottling Co.	400 East "B"
Quality Dairy	1400 North Seventeenth
Railway Express Agency Inc.	11 North First

Record Printing and Advertising Co.	115 South Illinois
Reed, Elmer C., Co.	709 West Cleveland
Renth, Elmer A.	1705 North Illinois
Richland Stove Company	P. O. Box 239
Rouse, Stillman	North Fifty-seventh
Rust, E. C. Plumbing	22 North Tenth
St. Louis Dairy	105 North Eighth
Signal Hill Lumber Co.	9300 West Main
Sinn, Lacergne Coal Co.	9026 West Main
Southwestern Bell Telephone Co.	17 North Illinois
Sprague Truck Service	213 East "B"
Stolze Lumber Co.	600 South Illinois
Tritt Brothers	Belleville National Bank Building
Tritt Brothers and Hoeffken Brothers	222 West "B"
Uhl, Andrew M.	Carlyle Road
Vangenhien and Son	106 South Ninth
Veile Contracting Co.	1701 North Church
Walter, Michael L. Co.	804 East McKinley
Wegener, Bill and Mel	417 South Fourteenth
Weyhaupt Bros.	1510 Lebanon
Yoch Construction Co.	700 South Illinois
Ziska, Fred M. Coal Co.	290 South Forty-sixth

## LABOR UNIONS

Although organized labor existed in Belleville before the Civil War it was not until April 12, 1891, that a central body was organized. The officers of the cigar makers' union, headed by John Ackerman, called this meeting, and Mr. Ackerman was elected as its first president, with Mr. Frank S. Burns of the glass blowers' union as its secretary. Eight locals, with a total membership of more than one thousand persons, were represented at this meeting. The organization prospered and expanded rapidly, and in June of that year two more locals affiliated themselves with it. The original locals, forming this central body, were the cigar makers, glass blowers, molders,

musicians, brewery workers, coal miner, carpenters, and stove mounters.

The chief event for labor locally is the Labor Day celebration. In the morning a big parade is held, which is followed by a picnic, graced by a state or a national speaker in the afternoon. With favorable weather it is always a big success as all groups cooperate to make it such. It was discontinued during World War I, and again during World War II.

Those who have served as presidents of the central body are: John Ackerman, Emile Kirchner, William Monsen, Al Boston, Adolph Scheske, William Green, James M. Sewall, John Shultz, Nic Schilling, George E. Boyce, James Borden, Charles Bender, William Arey, Henry Diller, William Jones, Nick Falcetti, Thomas Arey, T. J. Hitchings, Charles Markham, Fred H. Breuer, William T. Christopher, William Jampel, William Nebgen, Thomas Cameron, Gust Fritz, Dave Stuart, Walter De-wein, Jacob Bollman, Floyd Long, S. D. Easter, Al. Towers, Thomas T. Wright, Ed. Wolters, George Badgley, and Arthur Nowotny.

Al Towers held office as its secretary and publicity agent for more years than any man in the history of the organization. Mr. Towers was elected first on December 1, 1912, and served until he resigned in August, 1916. He returned in October, 1924, and served until the latter part of May, 1937, when he resigned again. He died on December 22, 1940. Since his resignation the organization has divided the position, having now a separate publicity agent and recording secretary.

The Central Trades and Labor body celebrated its golden anniversary in 1941 with the annual Labor Day parade and picnic. Roland W. Jung, then mayor, spoke on behalf of the city and extended congratulations to the workers for their fine progress and forward movement.

Some of the city's best known men received their training in parliamentary law at the meetings of the central body which



served as a school for many of them. Forty-four locals are affiliated with it today, and its membership has increased to 10,000, all of whom cooperate with the affiliated locals.

Belleville is regarded as a strong American Federation of Labor city. Ninety per cent of its working men either own their own homes or are buying them.

The present officers of the Central Trades and Labor body are as follows: George Badgley, president; Irvin Werner, vice-president; Irwin Breidenbach, treasurer; Paul Schwesig, secretary; William P. Reichling, business agent; Blanche Helwig, Rudolph Strothman, Albert G. Young, trustees; Harold Gain, sergeant-at-arms.

## CHAPTER IX

# A Century of Progress

SPORTS 1839-1951

**B**aseball which had its beginning from the English game of cricket had its beginning in the United States in 1839, but it was introduced to Belleville in about 1860. The baseball square which now has been changed to the baseball diamond was drawn by Alexander Cartwright of New York City in about 1845. The nine man team was first used in Hoboken, New Jersey in 1846, and the first rules of this game were drawn up by Mr. Cartwright.

There have been many changes in the game since it was first played in 1839. The catcher did not always stand right behind the batter, and the batters at first used clubs that were very thick on the batting end. Stealing bases was not permitted before 1860, and laying down a bunt was unknown. The catcher did not use a glove before 1891, and nine balls gave the batter his base as late as 1880. The catcher did not wear a mask, nor did he have a chest protector before 1885. If a ball was lost during the game, all the players had to hunt for it for five minutes before a new one was tossed in.

The first baseball team to be organized in our city was in the late 1870's when the Browns came into existence. The Nationals organized their team in 1885, and these two teams, which became the outstanding semi-pro clubs of the early days,

were both managed by the late Adolph G. Fleischbein, the uncle of Fred Fleischbein who, until 1946, was connected with the Belleville Music Store. He was the outstanding sportsman of early Belleville and was a leader in the sportsman and gun organization, as well as a writer for a sportsman's magazine.

One of Belleville's early baseball heroes who made good in the national pastime, in spite of the fact that it was not his chosen profession was Bob Groom. He had already completed a year's work as a medical student and hoped to be an outstanding physician some day, but when the call came to go to a spring training camp he could not resist. "Long Bob," as he was called, pitched a hitless game as a semi-pro for the old Belleville Simpson Stars in 1903 at the expense of Collinsville, who had Art Fletcher, the great New York Yankee coach, on the mound. While with Portland in the Pacific Coast League in 1908, Groom pitched a no hit, no run game against Los Angeles. He was a pitcher for the Washington Senators from 1909 to 1913, with the St. Louis Federals from 1914 to 1915, and the St. Louis Browns from 1916 to 1917, and with the Cleveland Indians in 1918. Twenty thousand fans at Sportsman's park witnessed a no hit, no run game he pitched with the Browns in 1917 against the Chicago White Sox.

After his baseball career ended he returned to Belleville to live, indulging in the national pastime only twice thereafter, once in 1938 and again in 1939 as manager of the two teams of the American Legion Junior Baseball state champions. He lived at 1906 West Main street and was president of the Groom Coal Company, a mine located on the Freeburg Road.

Max Flack, originally of Belleville but now living in East St. Louis, was another athletic hero, who figured in one of the strangest baseball incidents in the game's history. In a double-header between the St. Louis Cardinals and the Chicago Cubs, Max played the first game with the Cards. Between the first and second game he was traded to the Cubs for Cliff Heath-

cothe and played for the Cubs in the second game of the double-header. He was a great outfielder and hitter, and helped the Chicago Cubs win the National League pennant in 1938.

Belleville has been represented in major league baseball by at least 15 men, past and present, including some that have lived here all of their lives. They are as follows: Norman Schlueter, Al Glossop, Al Smith, Lester Mueller, Bob Groom, Max Flack, George Steuernagel, Hamilton Patterson, Billy Elwert, Jennings Bryan Patterson, Erwin Kreymeyer, James Decker, Otis Miller, Clarence Hoffman, Jess Doyle, and George Wagner.

The high school team, then coached by F. J. Friedli, won a state championship in 1934 by defeating Bloomington in a home and home series. Besides producing the championship team of 1934, his other coaching accomplishments are a no hit game by Jake Ullrich, four homers in one game by Fred Smith, one state championship, Les Mueller's strike-out record, and advance of several Maroons into organized baseball.

The lighted athletic field at Illinois street and Cleveland avenue ranks far above some of those used by the minor league baseball teams today. Here the Stag Beer team has won its many victories. The city boasts of three championship teams in the American Legion Junior Baseball League.

Basketball is belived to be the only game played in the United States today that is purely American in origin. All others are direct importations or hybrids of other games in foreign countries.

The Southwestern High School Conference was organized in 1923 with Collinsville, Belleville, Granite City, Woodriver, Alton, and Edwardsville as members. In 1924, Mascoutah was added, and in 1925, Jerseyville, Madison and O'Fallon joined, making it a ten team league. In 1926, Mascoutah, O'Fallon and Madison dropped out, but East St. Louis joined making it an eight team organization.

Belleville's first football team, known as the Tigers, was organized in the 1890's. Among its players were William Hoppe, Dr. John Gunn, William Andel, Arthur Heinzelman, Ray Daniels, and Ray Whiteside. Just after the turn of the century the Belleville Bucks Football Team was organized and these boys made gridiron history in the rough days of that sport. The team was in existence seven years, disbanding in 1908. Theirs was an enviable record, for during their last five years they not only were untied and undefeated, but during that entire time no opposing team scored or even crossed their goal line. This great team averaged only 145 pounds a man, but they beat outfits, including college crews, which outweighed them nearly 40 pounds a player. Quite a few of the boys were offered scholarships to play for colleges.

William (Cuddy) Gilbert was its captain. Among its players were Theodore R. Smith, Edward J. (Mucher) Engler, Ralph Leunig, William Huber, Arthur Hoffmann, Dr. Harry Reuss, William W. Underwood, William Powell, Fred Pope, Assistant County Treasurer J. Paul Moeller, Errol Kraemer, Charles McCullough, and Lawrance Selle. Aloys Hahn acted as their business manager.

Following right on the Bucks came the second Tiger team, which was organized in 1909 with Charles A. Betz as its manager. Included among its members were Earl (Punk) Wangelin, Roy Gilber, Ed Biggs, Arthur Ward, Charles Ehinger, Ernst Rodenmeyer, J. Rodenmeyer, George Karr, Elmer Baldus, Wallace Brandenburger, Oscar Neuner, Arthur Spoenemann, Ollie Goss, Roland Nebgen, John Keck, John Mowe, and Albert Loos.

About 1916 the Tigers underwent another revision. Some of the previous players held over, but added to these were Severin Poirot, Adolph Brandenburger, John Holtman, Adolph Fischer, Peter Maurer, John Roach, and Hugo Stark who gave his life in the first World War.

In 1929, the Belleville Township High School football team was really made up of 11 iron men, for in that year they defeated all the other conference members for the conference football championship. It was captained by Eddy James Rogers and coached by Edgar Gunderson. The members of the team were Leslie Cole, Ernest Glossop, Bernard Cole, Carl Kane, Ellis Patterson, Robert Aufdenspring, Harley Stiehl, Ralph Coburn, Walter Rauth, Charles Riegger, Winston Bullington, Relfe Ehret, and Merlyn Runyon.

With the start of Hubert Tabor's regime as football coach and the completion of a new stadium at the Township High School, interest in this particular sport received a boost. Larger turnouts of candidates for football at both high schools became evident, the turnout at the Cathedral High School being larger in proportion to the students enrolled. Charles Gervig and Elmer Jackson, were placed on the all-state eleven in 1938 and 1939 respectively.

The first championship team produced by Tabor was in 1938 when he had, apparently, eleven perfect gentlemen, and each of them a star football player. They were Vigil Wagner and Charles Gervig co-captains, Clyde Wiskamp, Allen Beverage, Creighton Cory, Lorraine Schlosser, Bob Seib, John Schell, William Reichert, Elmer Jackson, Walter Schmisser, Leroy Anna, Stewart McCord, Ralph Groh, Edward Dahm, Donald Le Pere, Warren Taylor, Bill Bevin, Warren Wild, Dean Johnson, Arthur Corn, Ernst Miller, Robert Moore and Lowell Grissom. Walter Schmisser and Warren Wild both made the supreme sacrifice in World War II. In 1944 and 1949 the team tied with East St. Louis and Alton for the conference championship.

The outstanding annual sports event is the football game between the Belleville and East St. Louis high schools on the morning of Thanksgiving Day. This has been a permanent contest since 1927, and record crowds witness the clash every



year. The playing field alternates between the two schools, and both the local high school student body and the general population are always glad when it is a home game.

The high school athletic grounds consists of five all-weather tennis courts believed to be the best high school courts in the state, a running track built to specifications furnished by the University of Illinois, a girls hockey field, and a new concrete stadium, complete with a band stand and a press box, and capable of seating 7,800 persons comfortably.

The stadium was a Works Project Administration project which was approved by the government in January, 1939, begun in March of that year. It is 420 feet long, 206 feet wide, has an underground drainage capacity of 1200 gallons per minute, a lighting system of five poles on each side with six reflectors on each, a public address system using four of the latest type reflex trumpet speakers, a drinking fountain at each end, which is connected to a copper coil fourteen feet underground holding eight gallons of water, a flag pole 60 feet above the ground, two rest rooms at the east end, and 106 feet of exit space that make it possible to empty the stadium in three minutes. The construction cost was \$130,840.00.

The stadium was completed in the spring of 1940 and dedicated on the night of the Belleville Township High School—Cathedral High School game, October 1., 1940. C. W. Whitten, executive secretary of the Illinois High School Association said that it was one of the finest stadiums in the state. Roland Jung, then president of the school board delivered an address at the dedication. The Board of Education consisted of Fred Merrills, secretary; Dr. Edmund Bechtold, Alvin Stenzel, Dr. Lester Rauth, Ed Fuhrman, Adolph Viehmann, and Elmer Roberts. Head coach Hubert Tabor and assistant coach Walter Rauth were also introduced.

A beautiful American flag was presented to the school by Commander James Burnett, who represented the American

Legion. While the high school band played "The Star Spangled Banner," the flag was raised to the top of the sixty-foot pole flooded by two spot lights. It was accepted by H. G. Schmidt, principal, who then introduced F. J. Friedli the athletic director, who has since been replaced by C. A. Armstrong in 1945, who took charge of the rest of the program. After a few remarks he presented Brother Wilfred P. Moran, S.M., Ph.D. who spoke for the Cathedral High School.

For a while there had been a decline in tennis at the high school, but Fred Nafziger, the new coach, was largely instrumental in reviving it. Past tennis champions include Ellar Daab, Elmer Hirth, and Howard Braun. Five very modern courts have been built at the high school.

Great records in track and field events have been made at the Township High School of late. Coach Ted Harpstreit's Maroons in 1939 and again in 1944 were the most outstanding in the history of the school. Wrestling, sport recently added to the school athletic program, is coached by Walter Rauth. Although no conference championship team has as yet been produced, Elmer Jackson, a member of the team, was the first boy to ever win a state title for the local high school, and it happened to be in this newest sport.

Belleville is no doubt one of the greatest bowling cities for its size in the United States. There are nine bowling alleys in which various leagues play every night except Saturday and Sunday.

Interest in boxing has been revived by the monthly amateur boxing shows.

Golf too is a favorite sport. Belleville has one eighteen hole grass green, the St. Clair Country Club, and three nine hole grass and sand fee courses at Westhaven Golf Course, Belleville Golf Course, and Oakhill's Golf Course.

In 1939 there was a revival of league competition in horse-shoe pitching, with special matches taking place all over the

city. The ringer record holder was Richard Wedel.

Harold Groh brought athletic honors home when he won the Big Ten diving title in 1927-28 as a member of the University of Illinois swimming team.

Strange as it may seem, Amos Thompson, who never owned a gun and killed only one deer during his lifetime—and that was accidental—had a son, Cyrus, who became Belleville's greatest big game hunter. Accompanied by Dr. C. P. Renner and Oliver Joseph, he made several trips into the southwestern part of Canada, as well as into the western mountain states for big game. There he brought down moose, elk, deer, antelope, bear, foxes, lynx, wild cats, mountain lions, mountain goats, wolves, and coyotes. Cyrus Thompson lived to the ripe old age of 92, passing away in 1937. So famous had he become as a hunter that the leading sportsmen's magazine of the country requested him to write of his experiences, and his stories made him a national figure in big game hunting.

Other sports engaged in are horse back riding, fishing, bicycling, motorcycling, pigeon racing, pocket billiards, soft ball, table tennis, and trap shooting. The last mentioned takes place at the Randle Country Club, and its crack shots are Roy Christmann, Arthur W. Bischoff, and Oscar and Julian Scheske. In August 1950, Oscar Scheske won the National Trap Shoot at Vandalia, Ohio.

## CULTURE AND RECREATION

Cities play the dominant role in the evolution of human culture. This is true because urban life powerfully influences the cultural interests of the entire community. The city is also a controlling factor in national life, for as the city is, so is the nation. City people supply most of the national leadership. Through the daily press and the radio the city dominates public opinion. It sets the fashions— in morals, in manner, and

in dress. The ideals of the nation are determined by the influential elements in its population.

Music ranks high in the culture of any city. The Germans who settled here brought with them their traditional love of music and song. Belleville's earliest musical organization, a singing society begun in 1855 and called the Saenger Bund, was definitely the outstanding singing society of this community. It gave its concerts at the old City Park Theater.

Belleville has had its native composers. The first one was John Brosius, who, in August 1863, composed a waltz entitled "Belleville" or "Schoenestadt." Then there was H. G. Paro, who on October 11, 1895, composed the "Company D March." This proved quite a success, for it was played by John Phillip Sousa's band in St. Louis.

The Belleville Band, the city's first, was organized in the early 1840's. Frederick Krimmel was its president and Peter Wilding its secretary. It dissolved in the summer of 1846.

Early in 1860, including both string and wind instruments, the Saxe Horn Band, was organized with Professor James as its director, and its headquarters in the northeast corner of Main and High streets. Its leader was John W. Hillim, its captain, A. L. McKane, and members John C. Hart, Charles Fleischbein, William R. Neighbors, Hugh Harrison, John Thoma, Charles and Thomas Fleming, John and Thomas Schoupe, and Philip Davis.

In the early sixties Frank Boehm also conducted a band, which in 1864 gave free concerts at the City Park Garden, the present site of the abandoned Budweiser Garden on West A street, between North First and North Second streets.

In 1865, the Bavarian Band was organized, and for many years it was the outstanding one in the entire community. Its name was derived from the fact that its members had all come from Bavaria, Germany. John Maurer, its leader for a number of years, resigned in 1883 to accept the position of orchestra

leader in the Kansas City, Missouri, Grand Opera House.

1881 saw the organization of the Concordia Band, which for many years was under the direction of John W. Marsh, with M. J. Baumgarten as its manager. It, too, had a high rating, and for many years it and the Bavarian Band were real rivals for musical honors. However, in the fall of 1899, a consolidation of these two bands was effected under the leadership of Professor Charles Krieger.

Professor Edwin Mayr, an able musician, organized a band in 1906. However, it was not until the American Legion Band came into being in 1924 that Belleville once more had a spectacular and ribbon-winning musical organization.

Today both the grade schools and the Township High School have splendid bands, as do also the parochial schools.

On November 19, 1866, a group of musicians organized an orchestral musical society called the Philharmonics, which gave its first concert on January 26, 1867. The organizers were Dr. Carl Neubert, Carl Magin, Henry Viehmann, Martin Medar, Theodore Decker, Martin Hess, and Christopher Espenhain. It is still in existence and claims to be the second oldest musical organization of its kind in the United States. Its conductors have been: Theodore Decker, 1866-69; Julius Liese, 1869-85; Gustave A. Neubart, 1885-1910; Dr. Adolph Hansing, 1910-11; Fred A. Kern, 1911-14; Frederick Fischer, 1914-19; Carl J. Magin, 1919-22; J. W. Marsh, 1922-36; Edwin Peters, 1936-39; Don S. Foster, 1939-43; Rudolph Magin, 1943-51.

We of the present generation should pause in sober reflection to pay respects to those responsible for maintaining an organization that has played such an important part in the cultural life of our city. We should pay tribute and do homage to men like Julius Liese, Gustav Neubart, John Marsh, Carl Magin, and Edwin Peters, whose inspiring leadership and untiring devotion as conductors made possible the splendid organization of the Philharmonic Society.



The Liederkrantz Society, organized in February 1873, was a choral and social group. In 1883 it bought the Heinrich Opera House for its permanent home and rechristening it the Liederkrantz Hall, used it for all of its brilliant concerts until disposing of it to the American Legion, whose home it now is.

The greatest of all events in the lives of the members of the various groups was the Saenger Fest. Once a year all musical groups combined and would compete in a festival of song. It was for years one of the highlights of the town.

In 1878, the Thespian Club, an amateur dramatical organization of young men and women, was organized, sponsored by Mrs. Charles Thomas and Mr. Ernest Hilgard. Timber for its amateur productions was drawn from the social register of the town by a man named Schrieber, and its performances became so outstanding that upon invitations they were presented in St. Louis. On the programs appeared such names as George K. Thomas, George Rogers, George Stanley, Fred Snyder, W. R. Merker, Lee Harrison, A. W. Stuart, Lena Abend, Gulla Scheel, Helen P. Abend, Mamie Boneau and Alice Rentchler.

Our earliest singing society the Kronthal Liedertafel, was named after Kronthal, Germany, the former home of Brosius, in whose residence their first rehearsals were held. This house, later the home of Mrs. Frank Perrin, was built as a replica of a castle in Kronthal. As the society grew its rehearsals were held at various times in the old Belleville House, above the Savings Bank, and above the Jackson Street Engine House. Concerts were given four times a year and these were held either in the City Park Opera House or in the Liederkrantz Hall.

A small faction of Liederkrantz members, breaking away from that society in February 1903, organized the Choral Symphony Society, which for a number of years contained some of the best vocal talent in the city. L. D. Turner, Sr., was its first president, and Ludwig Carl was its director. Participating



in a choral contest at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, it made quite a showing, receiving a commemorative medal from the World's Fair Association, and remained active until about 1911.

The Cecelia Chorus, an organization composed exclusively of women, was organized in 1911, gaining great popularity from the very first. It was organized by Sophia Rhein, who directed it in a talented musical way so that much of the success that was achieved by the organization was due to her energy, ability, and talent. "Something new and different" was Miss Rhein's motto in forming the organization, which in 1914 had a membership of fifty. The charter members were: Mrs. P. K. Johnson, Mrs. George Brechnitz, Miss Josephine Baker, Mrs. Fred Fleischbein, Miss Lillian Fuess, Mrs. Charles Harrison, Mrs. Lee Harrison, Mrs. Charles Huggins, Mrs. Rogers Hyde, Mrs. George Hilgard, Mrs. Philip Knapp, Miss Virginia Krebs, Mrs. Ralph Leunig, Mrs. Harry Lederer, Mrs. Josephine Merck, Miss Loisel Merker, Mrs. Frank Rogers, Miss Kate Meng, Miss Georgia Reichert, Miss Margaret Thomas, Miss Edna Sikkema, Miss Mary Turner, Miss Maude Underwood, Miss Sophia Rhein, Mrs. Carl Weingaertner, Miss Augusta Wilderman, Mrs. Hugh Wilderman, Miss Jessie Wilderman, and Miss Posey Woelk.

On August 24, 1906, the St. Clair County Historical Museum, which occupied a room in the basement of the Court House, was established. This museum contained all the old French records of Illinois dating back more than 200 years, and many other rare documents contributed by various citizens interested in early history. These were moved to the State Historical Society in Springfield in 1948.

The Belleville Daily Advocate has for some years concerned itself with spreading Christmas cheer among the needy through its annual Empty Stocking Fund. Ever since 1918, it has appealed at Christmas time for funds to be used in preparing

baskets of food and gifts for the poor families of our city, especially for the children who otherwise might face the tragedy of truly "Empty Stockings" on Christmas Day.

On March 24, 1920, the Parent-Teachers Association which has become a vital and active branch of the school system, was formed. Its first officers were Mr. C. A. Grossart, Wilhelmina Benignus, Walt Marsh and Arthur Niemeyer.

Fraternal organizations have been part of the community since an early day. Among those in existence are the Masons, Elks, Moose, Odd Fellows, Eagles, Knights of Phytias, and Modern Woodmen. The Catholic fraternal orders include the Knights of Columbus, Holy Name, St. Vincent de Paul, and Daughters of Isabella. The Masons are represented by Royal and Selected Masters, Knight Templars, De Molay, Eastern Star, Job's Daughters and Rainbow.

The first Masonic Lodge was organized on December 14, 1843, as St. Clair Lodge No. 24 A. F. and A.M., with John C. Teel as its First Worshipful Master. On June 10, 1922, the chapter of De Molay was organized with thirty-three charter members. Calvin Mank was chosen to head the new order.

On April 30, 1899 the Elks were organized with seventy-five charter members, and on November 17, 1910, the Elks Home was officially dedicated with District Grand Exalted Ruler Rich presiding at the ceremonies.

Other civic organizations include the Rotary Club, Optimists, Lions, South Side Improvement Association, West Side Improvement Association, Safety Council, and the Chamber of Commerce. Also of service have been the Women's Club, Business and Professional Women's Club, the League of Women Voters, and the Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Among the patriotic organizations are the George E. Hilgard Post of the American Legion with its women's auxiliary, the St. Clair County Chapter of the Red Cross, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Hecker Woman's Relief Corps,

the Memorial Day Association, and the Spanish American War Veterans.

The Hecker Post No. 433 Grand Army of the Republic was organized in Belleville on May 6, 1884, by veterans of the Civil War. It was named after one of them, the patriot and statesman Colonel Frederick Hecker, who had also been one of the leaders of the revolution in Germany in 1848. Today none survive.

The Hecker Women's Relief Corps was organized in 1892 with a membership of forty women. Mrs. Elisa Kueffner was elected its first president. It devotes its activities to charity and patriotic work. One of its presidents, the late Carrie Thomas Alexander Bahrenburg, served as president to both the Illinois and the national body of the Relief Corps.

The local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution was organized on August 31, 1916, in the assembly room of the Public Library. Its membership is composed of lineal descendants of soldiers of the American Revolution, who have banded together to preserve the ideals propounded by their patriotic ancestors. It strives to perpetuate the memory of the heroic deeds of men and women whose devotion and sacrifices have made this nation possible. Its motto is: "Home and country, the two essentials in our democracy." On September 13, 1941, it celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. Its regent then was Mrs. F. E. Schneidewind. Among the guests at that celebration were Mrs. O. H. Christ, Danville, Illinois, state regent; Mrs. John Trigg of St. Louis, national parliamentarian; Miss Helen McMackin of Salem, Illinois, national chairman of manuals; and Mrs. Manford Cox of Robinson, Illinois, director of the sixth division.

An auxiliary to the United Spanish War Veterans was organized in 1923 with Mrs. Mary Hubert as its first president. The wives, mothers, and sisters of these soldiers, working hard, have accomplished some worthwhile results.

The Memorial Fountain located on the Public Square was built as a monument to Belleville soldiers participating in any previous wars. It was the solution to the question as to what kind of memorial to build, for there was much opposition to a statue representing war. The majority preferred something that would beautify the square instead of constantly reminding them of by-gone wars.

The difficulties of building and financing a fountain were solved by public subscription. The labor unions volunteered to donate their services and without them the fountain could never have been built for its cost would have been prohibitive.

On May 22, 1937, the digging of the pump chambers, and a room 16 by 24 was ready for the pouring of the concrete. This excavation proved very interesting for it uncovered four old cisterns in the center of the Public Square, that had been used by our early fire departments.

The fountain was designed by Herbert Schwind. Hoeffken Brothers donated their digger, and the outer rim was constructed under the direction of Calvin Johnson. Seventy-five loads of ground were donated for the landscaping, while the sod, which was given by Albert Seiber, was laid by Fred Bonhardt. Arthur Buesch donated and planted the shrubs. The ornamental stone that was used was donated by Ben F. Affleck, of Chicago, a former resident.

Installation of pumps began September 25, 1937, two being put in, one of high pressure and the other of low. The high pressure pump forces the water through many pipes to form the various aquatic formations, having power enough to force the water fifty-five feet into the air. The low pressure pump forms the cascade over the lip of the fountain. The water falls into the surrounding circular pond draining back again to the pump to be circulated up and over the fountain. The mechanism is noiseless when in operation and is accessible from a man hole in the grass plot.

The Memorial Fountain was dedicated on October 23, 1937, with Dr. Cameron Harmon as the speaker. It was officially lighted by Betty Jane Schwind, the daughter of its designer. It can be seen on Main street as far west as Fifth street, as far east as Walnut street, north to Lebanon Avenue, and south to McKinley. The Memorial Fountain was made possible only through the unselfish efforts of civic-minded individuals and organizations, and it stands today as one of the finest tributes to the spirit of our citizens.

Belleville's Chamber of Commerce is an active one, and its program covers every phase of the city's life. At present there are 190 men serving on its various committees. It is divided into, and operates on, a departmental basis, the five divisions being industrial, civic, commercial, agriculture, and organization. At the present time its president is Wesley Bloomer, Walter E. Wagner is the secretary-manager.

The first park used for outdoor recreation was Huff's Garden now the Knights of Pythias Park, 900 West Main street. It was long the center of west Belleville's gay life.

In the southwest part of the city was Eimer's Hill, which in early days was also a favorite picnic ground. Today it has been wholly abandoned.

Priester's Park, managed by Frank Priester, was built in 1899 and soon became a most pretentious amusement center. It covered an area of 88 acres and included athletic fields, race courses, roller coaster, dance pavillions, a restaurant, and beer gardens. In 1906, it became a private institution and was called The Priester's Park Driving and Country Club. Today its buildings and grounds form a part of the huge campus of St. Henry's College.

On May 28, 1922, the first public park to be owned by the city was dedicated and formally named Bellevue Park. On this occasion the principal speaker was Mr. John Gundlach who was one of the pioneers in the park and playground move-



ment in St. Louis. Other speakers were Dr. J. K. Conroy and Mayor Joseph Anton. William Twenhoeft, city plan commissioner, was master of ceremonies. The gift of this park site to the people of Belleville was made possible through the generosity of the Board of Trade.

On September 18, 1923, ground was broken for the erection of the new \$100,000 Turner Hall.

On August 3, 1925, the South Side Park of Belleville consisting of six and one-half acres of land was formally dedicated and opened for public use.

All cities should have parks and playground areas. Long experience in many cities proves that they can be supported with little difficulty. There should be at least ten acres of park for each thousand of population. Of this, approximately one third of three acres per thousand, should be utilized for playground purposes.

## FIFTY YEARS OF PROGRESS 1850-1900

Belleville was incorporated as a village in 1819 and as a city in 1850. It adopted the charter of the city of Springfield, Illinois, and Theodore J. Krafft was elected its first mayor. The government of the city was then conducted by a mayor and eight aldermen, two from each of the four wards. The other city officials were a register, marshal, treasurer, attorney, assessor, collector, surveyor and engineer, chief of fire department, weigher and market master, street inspector, captain of night police, captain of day police, superintendent of workhouse, sexton, and city scavenger.

The most important street in this town of 5000 population was East Main street, and was also the first street to be improved, for in 1850 it was given a cover of crushed rock to counteract the mud and dust. It was further improved when on June 10, 1877, the city council ordered it to be paved with cedar blocks to Walnut street. Remnants of this type of paving remained



as late as 1930, when the last of it was removed on the street leading to the St. Clair Country Club.

Street fairs, the predecessor of the homecomings, attained their popularity in the late nineties. They, too, had their queens, parades, and carnivals which were not only attended by the whole town but also by the surrounding country.

At the time of the California gold rush a number of Belle-villeans, lured by the mirage of easy money and great riches, hit the trail for the Great West. Tradition has it that they were given good advice before they left, for they were warned that the road was long and dreary, that they would be without meat, flour, food, and water, and would find no grass in many places. They were jokingly advised to take a file with them, for if their trusty rifle should actually get a buffalo they would first have to file their teeth so they could eat it.

They were also informed that if they got sick on the road they had better keep toddling along. If they didn't and should by any chance lie along the road an Indian would come along and they'd be minus a scalp, they were told.

As a last bit of advice they were given the comforting assurance that should any of them perish on the way, a little hole three feet deep would be dug where they'd be buried and where that night the wolves would hold a council over their grave, prior to a digging-up party.

How many hit the treacherous, heart-breaking trail to the Pacific is not recorded, but it is known that many came back sadly disappointed and poorer than they were before. Some came back to further disillusionment, for after an absence of ten or fifteen years, to their dismay, some found their mates happily married to others, after uncertain rumors had it that the first husband had been killed by the Indians.

By 1854 Belleville had enlarged its area, increased its wealth, and more than doubled the amount of improvements to its streets. The manufacturers were expanding and increasing their

trade. Most of the early settlers that came from the east brought with them large families. Those that came from Virginia and other southeastern states brought their slaves, and their right to keep them was at once questioned.

At the same time run-away slaves were not tolerated. Any Negro who could not present the proper credentials of freedom to the county authorities was regarded by law as a run-away slave. He was arrested, held in the county jail, and the sheriff advertised his arrest. If the owner did not reclaim him within six weeks he was sold into slavery for a period of one year, at the end of which time legally, at least, he was entitled to his freedom unless the original owner appeared.

Belleville had more run-away slaves than most communities, since it was located on the route between Virginia and Missouri, and the wealthy planters traveling between the two states always passed through the city.

On November 11, 1841, the town's local paper carried the following run-away negro advertisement: "Taken up and committed to jail on the third of November, 1841 in the county of St. Clair, State of Illinois, a Negro who calls himself Jordan and says he formerly had been owned in Richmond County, Virginia, by Newman Flanagan but was sold at public auction and does not know his present owner. He is five feet nine, weight 175 and is about 28 years old. His owner must prove his property within six weeks or said Negro will be dealt with according to law."

It was openly contended by many people that slave owners should move to Missouri, while those not having slaves should settle in the free state of Illinois, and that Negroes who remained in this state for ten days with the purpose of becoming a resident should be fined fifty dollars. If they were unable to pay their services they should be sold at public auction.

On April 7, 1857, a mulatto named Jackson Redman made the fatal mistake of leaving Pennsylvania, was arrested, tried,

and convicted for the misdemeanor under the Illinois law. On April 18, 1857, at one o'clock in the afternoon, his services were to be sold to any person who paid the said fine and costs. The appearance of this ad brought a storm of protest on the justice of the peace, who was only performing his duty in enforcing the law.

On the day of the sale the great humanitarian Gustav Koerner, without much ado, paid the fifty dollar fine and immediately turned the Negro free. By court decision a Negro living here for a period of five years automatically became a free citizen. Many slave-owning families therefore left the state.

One of the most tragic chapters of local history was that written by the cholera epidemic, which originated in St. Louis in the summer of 1849 and swept away nearly 300 people in a month's time. Medical men were unable to check it, and the dreaded disease continued to ravage the lives of the people. It wiped out entire families who were helpless against its onslaught.

To prevent the spread of the disease, the people were cautioned to purify the air and keep the streets in a sanitary condition, which was done by sprinkling them generously with slaked lime. Lime was also abundantly spread on private premises, but better than this large fires of coal tar and sulphur were kept burning day and night, and yet everywhere people were dying.

The hopeful housewife, fearing for the lives of her loved ones, listened and followed every new suggestion by the doctors, some of whom recommended the burning of coffee beans, boiling vinegar continuously, and pouring coal tar on the top of the stove to smother out all impurities of the air. The epidemic raged on, however, and approximately two-thirds of all cases were fatal. Not only was this true here but also in St. Louis, East St. Louis, Mascoutah, Collinsville, and Lebanon.

The disease spared neither young, middle-aged nor old. It had no regard for the hale and hearty man, the tender and hand-

some youth, nor the kind and gentle woman.

Since then medical science has discovered that cholera is a bacterial disease and that the germ is spread through drinking water, foods, and by the common house-fly. Like today's influenza, the cholera epidemic of old struck and then departed after having run its fatal course.

The homes in the earlier days were very sturdy. Sunbaked bricks, hand-hewn white oak beams, and plaster of clay and straw were the basic materials for the houses of over a century ago. Heavy weather boarding was apparently the vogue in the construction of the frame houses. Inner walls were of hand molded bricks made of native clay and baked in the sun. Wood, now used only in high-grade furniture could be found in many parts of the home, for often they had walnut window sills and wild cherry panels.

The cooking stove was an innovation, for the earlier homes had fireplaces supplied with kettle hooks, which gave the family hearth its real meaning. But with the coming of the stove the city in time became the stove center of the world.

Commercial soap in pioneer days was an unknown commodity. At intervals, usually dictated by the supply on hand, a time was set aside for the making of soap. This was cooked in a large iron kettle which generally stood on a tripod in the rear yard.

The bathtub, too, was rare, largely because of the difficulty in heating the home. It was introduced in the early seventies and was nothing more than a box-like affair lined with zinc. Since there was no running water it was filled by carrying the water that had been heated on a stove beforehand.

It was at this time that a city ordinance was passed regulating the speed of driving cattle or horses through the streets. The law read that they must not be driven faster than four miles an hour nor must they be driven with dogs, and anyone guilty of violating this law would be fined from \$3.00 to \$25.00.

It must have been difficult to measure their speed, for speedometers were then unknown.

Another ordinance regulated the cost of digging a grave according to its depth. One of three feet or less depth cost 75 cents, one four feet, \$1.00, while that of more than four feet, \$1.50.

After the Mexican War, 1846-48, returning soldiers wore beards, the most popular of which were the English side whiskers. This new style was not adopted at once by the local people, but in 1854, when the barbers agreed that the price of a shave should be 10 cents instead of the prevailing charge of 5 cents, there was loud and long wailing by the masculine element. To make their protests more effective, they organized a beard growers society and not only adopted, but also published this resolution: Resolved: "That the lather used by the aforementioned barbers, being of a quality which is calculated to advance the growth of the beard, we emphatically enter our protest against the agreement referred to unless the barbers also agree to use nothing but the common castile for lather."

The development of agriculture in this area was constant. The German immigrants brought from their native land a knowledge of the intensive methods of farming. Although the soil was rich, the German farmer unfailingly reclaimed all wasteland and also improved methods of crop rotations. Their thrift and love of the beautiful led to the well improved farms of today. Wheat at the time averaged 20 to 28 bushels per acre, and in 1851 it sold for 65 cents a bushel. However, in 1867, it had risen to \$3.70 a bushel and this community produced about six hundred thousand bushels a year.

Although the second panic in 1857 hit many communities very hard, business here remained good. The streets remained lively with wagons from the country, bringing produce for cash and goods. Everywhere one could still hear the sound of the hammer and saw, indicating that work was plentiful. Every-



where one heard the query, "Do you know of a house for rent?" All were happy and prosperous.

The reaper had now been invented and the old, back-breaking cradle and sickle were on the way out. The threshing separator separated the wheat grain from the straw at the time of threshing and the farmer could now raise much more wheat. It was then that the old threshing circuits, long famous for their jolting wagons, the pitching to the machine, the stream of straw and chaff from the blower, and the bountiful dinners came into existence. But even these good old days have gone with the wind, for most farmers now own their own combines.

Coffee, as we know it today, was a luxury that could be enjoyed only by the rich during the Civil War days, and the poor housewife besides her many other tasks had to roast the coffee substitutes such as barley, wheat, sweet potatoes, corn and even, at times, acorns.

By 1862 Belleville had not only grown in size but had become more beautiful. A Chicago newspaper referred to it as a beautiful little village. Much had been done to make it a safe place in which to live, and in 1867 the city council passed an ordinance making it a misdemeanor to cast or throw stones or any other missiles upon or at any building, tree, or public or private property, or at any person. Anyone doing so was subject to a fine not exceeding \$5.00.

That same city also regarded kite flying as dangerous, and to curb it the following ordinance was passed: "Whoever shall, on any highway, or thoroughfare of this city, fly a kite, or use any sport or exercise likely to scare horses, injure passengers, or embarrass the passengers of vehicles, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine."

By 1870 Belleville had a total of forty miles of street, 16 miles of which had already been paved and could be travelled safely at all times of the year, and twenty miles of sidewalk had been laid.



During an era of prosperity Lady Nicotine soothes the hearts of men a little faster or a little more than at any other time. The white man learned the art of using tobacco from the Indians, Sir Walter Raleigh being the first prominent white man to smoke the "vile weed." Local men could now go to the cigar store and buy half spanish cigars, snuff, and smoking or chewing tobacco. Gentlemen who preferred chewing to smoking, or inhaling of snuff were kept well supplied, for chewing then was much more popular than it is today, and the spitters were also much more accurate.

Before the invention of cigar making machines, the one-man cigar factories dotted all the cities. Here the cigar-maker would, with nimble fingers, ply his chosen trade. Whenever a customer bought a box of these hand-made cigars (then called segars) the proprietor would present him with an extra one. The cigars were graded into first, second and third quality, and the particular quality one smoked usually determined his economic rather than his social rank—a sort of caste system still carried on today in the dime, two-for-a-quarter, and quarter brands.

Pipe smoking followed later in popularity, with the result that many brands of pipes appeared on the market. The old Germans always brought with them from the fatherland their traditional Meerschaum pipe. To accidentally break a friend's Meerschaum was a serious offense, second only to that of stealing his wife.

Snuff with all of its snuffing was definitely on its way out, as apparently chewing is today. No longer does one see snuff-stained shirts nor do as many brass cuspidors line the bar. With the passing of these, the cigarette has been ushered in, as a result of World War I, and more likely, to the effect of high powered advertising. The introduction of the cigarette at first brought a deluge of condemnation, and cigar or pipe smoking fathers would not permit a cigarette smoking youngster to court his daughters.

By 1870 a very extensive system of agricultural manufacturing was being done in this city. \$300,000 worth of these implements were sold annually, with two iron and brass factories kept busy supplying the wants of these factories.

Although the Richland Creek is small, its history is a colorful one. In all probability it got its name from the fact that it flows through rich agricultural lands. As a stream it has never behaved too well, for at times it is a rampaging little river, while at other times it is almost entirely dry. It has marked the dividing line between East and West Belleville and as such has been the scene of many a battle between East and West Belleville youths in the early days. East Belleville always regarded itself superior in all respects in those days and the expression "He's a West End tough" had much significance then.

Richland Creek in the early days was not only a dividing line but was also the local Rhine river, for many were the young people who kept the "watch on the Rhine." It was, however, never fortified, but some of the battles were perhaps just as violent, even though the casualties amounted only to black eyes and bloody noses. The boys on opposite sides carried on eternal vigilance, challenging one another to cross the line. Under such watchful eyes, it must have required courage and a strong right arm at times, to seek the hand of a girl on the other side. Happily those animosities are things of a by-gone day.

It was on its banks just south of the city that Kickapoos usually camped after their raiding parties on the American Bottoms. Here on several occasions the terrified white captives pondered their fate as they lay bound in the red man's camp.

Partly because of its rampages and partly because it was blamed for chills and fever, Richland Creek lost its good reputation. Some thought it caused the cholera epidemic in 1849, and perhaps rightly so, for the stream after every overflow

left pools of stagnant water that smelled obnoxiously, and were breeding grounds for mosquitoes and disease germs.

Its overflows have come with regularity. The first was recorded in 1848 when the creek became so large that it proceeded to sweep in its path all existing bridges, down to the Kaskaskia River.

On the night of March 4, 1897, a very heavy rain storm sent the creek out its banks so hurriedly that some of the flood refugees had to be rescued from their homes by boats. So heavy were the rains that the dam at Lake Christine broke and let a perfect Niagara of water into the already swollen creek, adding to the great damage. Gaping holes occurred into which the water swirled, even rushing into the coal mines. The Oakhill Mine and all slope mines were thus flooded.

On August 19, 1915, occurred another damaging flood. For the first time since the West Main street concrete bridge had been built, water swirled over it for several hours. Hundreds of rowboats rescued people from second-story windows. The power plant was flooded, cutting off all power, and damage in the city was estimated at \$100,000.

The town of West Belleville was laid out on a hill on the west bank of Richland Creek in the year 1852, the land being part of a two hundred acre farm owned by Theodore Erasmus Hilgard. In 1861, there were six hundred inhabitants, and in that year it officially incorporated itself and adopted the name of West Belleville. The little village had its own institutions, for in 1855 a brick school was built with one large room for classes and two smaller ones for the teacher and his family. It also had its own market house on the West End Square at Eleventh street, its own Western Brewery and its own distillery. By 1874, its population had increased to 2500 inhabitants, with many nationalities represented, but with Germans predominating.

As time went on, there arose a mutual desire to merge the

two independent communities into one, for it was believed much could be gained by each in such a merger. So, in an election held to vote on the issue on April 18, 1882, the people of both towns approved the merger, and three days later, April 21, 1882, West Belleville officially became a part of Belleville.

On Saturday night, April 26, 1882, the ratification celebration was held at Huff's Garden, now the Knights of Pythias Park, where events of importance for West Belleville always took place. A large parade, headed by a blaring band, marched to the Public Square where the procession was joined by the citizens of East Belleville, and together they marched back to the park. The night was rainy, the streets were muddy, but the crowd was large. Here, promises were exchanged to forget all past animosities and to work together in harmony so that the new city might prosper.

Belleville had now begun its move to the west. It was because of the mining industry that its westward expansion continued, for a string of mining settlements had sprung up between the city and the bluffs.

The stories of the weather today are much less interesting than those in the past. Facts and predictions today are based upon scientific measurements which are undebatable and which take the personal touch from all weather accounts. Early people had leeway. The best judges of the weather were the older residents, who had lived through more of it and therefore remembered the days that were colder, the rains that were heavier, and the summers that were hotter. Blizzards, the oldest inhabitants could recall, appeared with the regularity of a clock. One story relates how, during the winter of 1885, the tracks of the Cairo Short Line, now the Illinois Central were so blocked by snow that the cars were entirely buried beneath the drifts. The passengers suffered extremely from cold and hunger because there was no settlement or house nearby from which to obtain food or fuel. A gentlemen in one of the trains

had a couple of dogs with him which were killed and eaten by the starving party.

Another tale tells that during the cold winter of 1856, the Mississippi River was frozen solid for 64 days. In fact, the ice was so thick that people rode horseback across it. Then there was the blizzard of all blizzards in 1890 when eighteen to twenty inches of snow fell, and all roads and railroads were snowbound.

Medical science today assures us that aged and rheumatic people are not as reliable in measuring the temperature as is a thermometer.

The hailstorm that surpassed them all rattled down on Belleville on April 16, 1918. So severe was it that the roofs that had been rain-proof became like a sieve, and cars and buggytops were peppered with holes. Thousands of window panes were shattered.

Most residents today remember the tornado of March 15, 1938, that blew in from the southwest at 5 o'clock that afternoon. It demolished the Union Grade School, ruined Suppiger's cannery, crossed Main street at the Southern crossing, flattened out homes in a four block area, took a total of twelve lives and did \$500,000 worth of property damage. Many in the east end of town were unaware of its happening until four hours later.

By 1884, Belleville was a thriving substantial community of 16,000 people. It had more than fifty miles of improved streets most of them illuminated by electric lights while some were still lit by gas furnished by an extensive gas works with a capacity to meet all needs both public and private.

It was evident at this time that Belleville was fast becoming industrialized. The city had acquired good government. There was law and order. The schools compared favorably with any. Churches administered to the spiritual life. The city was on its way up.



## CHAPTER X

# In War

SCOTT FIELD

**A**s early as 1917 it was becoming more and more apparent that future wars would no longer be fought only on and below the earth's surface, but also in the air, and that more men were going to be needed to fly the ever-increasing number of planes. With this in mind the War Department in June, 1917, purchased a field a mile square near Belleville, which was to be used as a training center for aviators. \$10,000-000 was appropriated by Congress for its construction, and two thousand laborers and carpenters were immediately put to work.

Actual building was begun in June, 1917, and work was pushed so feverishly that it was completed in September of the same year, for the United States was really in need of airplane pilots and fields on which to train them. The area was small and the buildings looked like hastily constructed crates. Seeing the present base, one would hardly realize that it could ever have been so small.

Although it may be the opinion of a few of the old-timers that the installation was originally called Avia Field, such is not the case, as Avia was merely the name of the railroad station of the Southern Railroad located a short distance away. Following the usual procedure of naming aviation fields in honor of American fliers who had distinguished themselves, this one was named Scott Field later changed to Scott Air Force Base, in honor of Cpl. Frank S. Scott, who met death in an exper-



imental flight in the first army aviation school at College Park, Maryland, in 1912.

In August, 1917, while construction work still going on and with its 75 buildings not yet completed, three hundred soldiers arrived for duty. In September four airplanes were received, the first of the 72 planes ordered for Scott Field. Soon the actual training of airplane pilots began. On August 27, 1917, Major George E. A. Reinberg, Signal Corps, became the field's first commanding officer.

Students began arriving daily, and by the end of September more than one thousand men were stationed there. With their arrival from all parts of the country, came quarantine, one of the bugaboos of camp life. Measles developed, which spoiled the first Christmas vacation, many having hoped to go home, while others had received invitations from the kindhearted Belle-villians. Luckily, a few days before the holidays expired, the ban was lifted, but with two more squadrons arriving from Texas, the epidemic broke out again, putting the camp once more under quarantine.

In January, 1918, Colonel J. C. Fechet arrived, replacing Major Reinberg. Later in that same year Major Henry Abbey, Jr., assumed command.

After the Armistice, November 18, 1918, a great deal of concern was felt as to what would happen to this field. Since it was no longer needed as a training center for the Army's aviation cadets, the personnel was cut down until only 65 remained.

In October, 1919, Major J. H. Houghton replaced Major Abbey. During the next year there was very little activity at the post. In 1920, the government decided that the field should be converted into the nation's headquarters for the training of airship pilots and ballon observers, thus discontinuing all heavier than air training. The United States government then, on March 19, purchased outright the land on which Scott Field

was located. The purchase price for the 640 acres was \$119,-285, a little over \$170 per acre.

In 1921 the War Department approved a plan for an erection of a \$1,200,000 hangar, which was to be 220 feet wide, 180 feet high and 910 feet long, with landing facilities, 1,500 by 150 feet, fronting the hangar. This field was now converted into the home of the dirigible, observation balloon, round free balloons, and the sausage balloon, all of which were regarded as supremely important at the time.

Construction of this hangar was approved by the Secretary of War in 1921. Major Frank M. Kennedy, its designer, arrived now to assume command of the post in October, succeeding Colonel C. G. Hall. He supervised the entire construction of the hangar, which was completed that year at a cost of \$1,-360,000. It dominated the countryside for miles around and was a greater attraction to visitors that were dirigibles themselves. Its floor had space enough for 100,000 men to stand in military formation; and every visitor that saw it would speculate on how much the hangar would hold in corn, wheat, or hay, while others would compare it with the Washington Monument or the Empire State Building. The two doors at its entrance weighed almost 2,000,000 pounds each. It took electrically driven motors seven and one-half minutes to open them.

With completion of the hangar, Major Kennedy received orders to proceed to Germany to supervise the construction of a Zeppelin for the United States government. He was succeeded by Major John H. Paegelow.

Other building projects in the \$5,000,000 lighter than air base were as follows: 175 foot high mooring mast, an extensive helium laboratory where the gas was purified after having been used in the dirigibles, and an engineering department near the hangar.

On October 3, 1923, the world's largest lighter-than-air craft, the United States Shenendoah landed at Scott Field. On January

28, 1926, the R.S.-1, largest army dirigible in the world, was completed at the field and given a successful tryout. The peak of construction was attained when the T C-14 and the T C-11, non-rigid air ships, were built. The T C-14 was 237 feet long, 57 feet in diameter and had a 365,000 cubic feet gas capacity. These dirigibles resembled silver cigars floating in the air, and they soon became familiar figures to everyone.

The blimp was a non-rigid bag having no inner frame work and was therefore nicknamed "the rubber cow" or "fat sausage." The operator in the control car, swung by cables beneath the bag, controlled its direction and speed of travel.

On August 8, 1925, St. Clair County received \$35,292 from the United States government for the construction of the new hard road to Scott Field. It was the first time in the history of the state that federal aid had been secured by a county without any effort on the part of the state.

During the years 1928-29 it seemed that Scott Field was fast becoming Uncle Sam's step-child. There was even a movement on foot then, that it be abandoned entirely, as need for it no longer seemed to exist. Civic groups both in Belleville and the surrounding territory began to realize what this would mean, and at once formed a National Defense Committee to fight for its retainment. Congressman John T. Cochran of Missouri, on the floor of the House of Representatives, fought for its continuance. In June, 1930, Congress finally authorized \$1,206,500 for additional construction work at the field. Heavier than air operations were then resumed, and Scott Field soon became the largest and most completely equipped government inland airship base and ballon and airship school.

The year 1933 marked the termination of active duty for Colonel Paegelow, and in August, Lieut. Colonel Frank M. Kennedy returned to take over command.

In 1935, Congressman Edwin M. Schaefer of Illinois pro-

posed a bill to provide \$4,338,000 for further improvement of Scott Field which congress approved.

In February, 1937, Colonel Kennedy was ordered to report to Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio, and was succeeded by Colonel Arthur J. Fischer, who had been transferred here from Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Alabama.

On May 14, 1937, the lighter-than-air crafts were discontinued at the field, for with the exception of perhaps coastal patrol, their day had passed. It was again rumored that the field would be abandoned, but on May 14, 1937 the War Department changed Scott Field from a lighter-than-air to a heavier-than air field. The baby blimps and dirigibles were deflated and the Ninth Air Squadron was assigned to another field. The day of the huge cigar-shaped silver painted dirigibles was over as far as this area was concerned. A total of forty carloads of cylinders, each cylinder weighing 130 pounds and capable of holding two hundred cubic feet of gas was shipped to Duncan Field, San Antonio, Texas, where they were serviced and sent to the helium plant at Amarillo, Texas.

In 1938, Scott Field was rebuilt in its entirety. The big helium plant, the dirigible hangar, the mooring mast, the old wooden barracks, and administration buildings were torn down. The mile square field was enlarged and criss-crossed by concrete runways for landing fields, which completed were 250 feet wide and about two miles long. The field hangar, which originally cost \$1,360,000, was sold to the wreckers for \$20,051.

On June 2, 1938, the War Department designated Scott Field as the new home of the General Headquarters of the Air Forces of the entire United States Army. An additional twelve hundred acres of land was bought adjoining the present field to the east and the north. Because of its ideal geographic location and strategic regions of defense, this field now was destined to become the center of all army air activities.

The tearing down of the old buildings began on July 18,

1938, and soon the \$7,500,000 improvement program got under way. New hangars, shops, barracks, officers quarters, general headquarters building, quarters for the various mechanical equipment, in all 73 major buildings, were soon under construction.

On June 1, 1939, Scott Field was designated as the Scott Field branch of the Army Air Corps Technical Schools, and the basic section of the school, which was located at Chanute Field, Rantoul, Illinois, was transferred to Scott. This involved the movement of all civilian instructors, 29 enlisted instructors, and five officers to Scott Field. In August, 1941 an allotment of \$1,710,150 was made for the construction of 160 new buildings at the field. This was in line with the plan that Scott Field was to house eight thousand men.

New buildings on the post were constructed with funds from the Public Works Administration. An average of two thousand men worked at the field constantly in connection with this project, the outstanding feature of which was the new mess hall that was to serve six thousand men. This building is the shape of a capital "H" with the kitchen in the cross bar. There are four dining halls providing eight lines for cafeteria style serving. The center of the building is used for storage and kitchens.

To house the more than forty-five hundred students with the Radio Communications School, a new cantonment area was constructed on the southeast section of the post. The students began moving into this miniature city in December, 1940, and it has since been called the Student Center. Colonel Walcott P. Hayes, the commanding officer was succeeded on July 2, 1940, by Colonel Fischer. He in turn was succeeded by Colonel J. P. Temple on February 11, 1944, and he, on March 15, 1944, by Brig. General Shepler W. Fitzgerald.

The last vestige of the lighter-than-air era at Scott Field disappeared on October 30, 1941, with the shipment of seven



carloads of helium containers.

The Air Corps Institute at Scott Field established under the direction of Co. Frank H. Pritchard in December, 1940, has the only correspondence school of its kind in the United States. With applications for the 33 available subjects coming in from fifty army posts all over the nation, as well as from distant possessions, the enrollment has far exceeded ten thousand.

Scott Air Force Base is today a complete city in itself, containing all the necessities of life and the comforts of modern living. It has been enlarged three times its original size. It contains restaurants, motion picture theaters, recreation grounds, libraries, service clubs, gymnasiums, community halls, swimming pools, and a day room where the men may play table games, listen to the radio, read, or play the piano.

The field is also equipped with a prison, an efficient police force, a new hospital, a modern and completely equipped fire station, a postal system, a bank, and an extensive sewerage disposal system emptying into a three-mile ditch to Silver Creek.

Approximately twenty-five thousand air corps radio technicians were being trained every year by the Army Corps Radio Operators and Technician School. Students entered at the rate of eight hundred every two weeks and received a 22 week radio course in operation and line maintenance of air craft radio equipment, and in the installation, operation and field maintenance of tactical ground radio equipment. Scott Field had a personnel of around twenty-five thousand including officers, permanent men, and students. From it were directed all operations of the United States Army Air Corps. It will always be the focal point for the wings of the United States Air Force.

## OUR PART IN THE WARS

Whenever this country has gone to war, men of Belleville have not been reluctant to take up arms and do their part to



preserve the ideals and the rights of free men as guaranteed by the government.

George Rogers Clark was the first to open this area to the American pioneer. Some of his courageous little band later settled here, the most noted of these being the Reverend Hosea Rigg of Pennsylvania, who enlisted when only 19. He fought in the battle of White Plains, Germantown and Brandywine, settling in this area a little later and spending the next forty years of his life here. He died at his home two miles east of Belleville in 1841.

In 1809, when British agents were stirring up the Indians in the West, it was the Rangers, their patrols, and blockhouses that quelled the raids and forced the Red Man to make peace. A line of blockhouse forts sixty miles long was built from the Missouri to the Kaskaskia Rivers. This line was patrolled by 22 forts, one of them was near Lebanon, another south of New Athens, and another in Mascoutah township. Four companies of Rangers kept this line intact and warded off all Indian attacks.

In the War of 1812, many of these Rangers joined the Army, which later defeated the British at New Orleans. Of them the most famous were William Whiteside, James B. Moore, Jacob Short, and Samuel Whiteside. Governor John Reynolds, then a young man, saw service at this time.

During the Black Hawk War of 1831 to 1832, named after Chief Black Hawk living in the Rock River County of Illinois, Governor Reynolds issued the call for volunteers to force these Indians out of the state. Many men responded, and some of them fought with the future president, Abraham Lincoln, who was chosen captain of his company. Among local men who volunteered were Adam W. Snyder and John Thomas, the latter rising to the rank of colonel in this campaign. The result of this war was that the Indians were forced out.

When the call for volunteers came in the Mexican War, (1846-48), local citizens were eager and ready to fight, and several companies of volunteers were formed. The first one known as the Second Illinois Regiment, was organized in May, 1846, by William H. Bissell then a young local attorney. Bissell later became colonel of this regiment, winning much acclaim for his service. It was his good work that helped attain the governor's seat for him. His company did more fighting than any other, suffering a loss of sixty-five killed, eighty wounded, and ten missing.

When Bissell's regiment returned at the end of the war, it was given a reception of welcome, at which Bissell praised the officers and men of the Second Illinois Regiment, saying they had fought bravely and well. Bissell dwelt at length on their high sense of personal honor and the high moral sense instilled in them by their fathers and mothers, to whom he accredited all honor.

Another company of volunteers was organized by Nathaniel Niles, who later edited the Daily Advocate. He was also captain of a company of Texas Infantry which fought in the battle of Monterey and Buena Vista.

When Lincoln issued his call for volunteers in April, 1861, many answered the call and enlisted. A training camp, named Camp Koerner, was established at the old Fair Grounds where a local company of volunteers was prepared for war. Many of these young men rose from private to colonel and some were with Sherman in his march to the sea. Others fought in the Battle of Gettysburg. The Ninth Illinois Infantry, in which Belleville was well represented, took part in 110 battles.

Of particular note is the fact that Germans, only a few years removed from their native land, fought gallantly for the land of their adoption. Most noted of these were Colonel Friederich Hecker, and Gustavus Koerner.

On May 8, 1861, Ulysses S. Grant, then only a captain,

paid a visit to Belleville. He was on an inspection tour and talked to those in charge of the camp, including Captain Koerner, Henry Goedeking, and Henry Kircher. When he arrived, Hecker's boys were drilling and made a good showing. Grant met the officers in charge and later had a soldier dinner with them.

In the War with Spain, April 19, 1898, to December 12, 1898, Belleville's chief contribution was its Company D of the Fourth Regiment of Illinois Infantry, which was sent to Cuba.

Belleville is justly proud of its contributions to the Navy. Captain Joseph B. Coghlan, who commanded the warship Raleigh in the Battle of Manila, spent his boyhood here. Lt. Commander William Braunersreuther, who lead the party of Marines which took possession of the island of Guam, was also a Belleville resident. He too took part in the Battle of Manila Bay. Among the Navy's admirals in the Spanish-American War were Hugo Osterhaus and Kossuth Niles. Major General Wesley Merritt, the son of an editor of the Daily Advocate, led an American force which stormed the city of Manila after Dewey had destroyed the fleet and silenced the forts. He served as the first military governor of the Phillippine Islands. Admiral Louis Kempff, commander of the warship Monterey, became governor general of the Island of Guam in recognition of his services.

On June 28, 1914, World War I broke in Europe. When the United States entered it on April 6, 1917, Belleville boys again played a heroic part in this great conflict as they served on all of its far-flung battle fronts. On June 16, 1917, more than fourteen thousand men from St. Clair County registered for the selective draft. The boys, from 21 to 31, who registered from here numbered 2,024 which was nearly ten per cent of the 1910 population. Forty-two names are on the first World War's honor roll of war dead. Heading this list is Major General

George E. Hilgard after whom the American Legion Post was named.

The military and naval heroes from this city have been many. To single out any one as being greatest, would be an injustice to the rest. Every war leaves not only its dead, but also the organizations that spring up to perpetuate its memory. There are still such organizations as the Daughters of the American Revolution, Spanish American War Veterans, American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars, the latter an offshot of the preceding one. Any World War veteran may belong to it. The local chapter was organized on January 14, 1934, by August Franke, John Pollock and Frank Yerck with 65 charter members. Its membership today has increased to three hundred, and its past commanders have been August Franke, Philip Wagner, Dr. William Kneedler, Charles Ehinger, Arthur Nowotny, Frank Yerck, and Harry Morton.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars sponsor a colorful drum and bugle corps, which was organized by Dr. Kneedler while he was commander of the organization in 1936. It won first place during 1938 and 1939 at the department encampment of Veteran of Foreign Wars.

In 1940, when World War II was looming on the horizon, one city and two county draft boards were created to arrange for the induction of draftees into the army. They classified all registrants and took care of the administrative duties pertaining to their respective areas. The members of Belleville's draft board were Dr. G. C. Otrich, chairman; Wilbur E. Krebs, secretary; and Robert L. Kern, Albert B. Baldus, and Joseph B. Herman. Frank C. Wuller was the chief clerk; Mildred E. Moehrl, assistant clerk; and Jeanett L. Schiermeier, typist.

The Burke-Wadsworth Selective Service Act required all men and boys between the ages of 21 and 35 to register for army service on October 16, 1940. Thirteen per cent of the city's population, or a total of 3353, registered. Again on July

1, 1941, boys who had attained the age of 21 since October 16, 1940, were also required to register for army service. The draftees had to report to the local board headquarters from where they were sent to the induction center, which at first was East St. Louis, then Peoria, and later Chicago.

On February 16, 1942, men between 20 to 45 registered, while on April 27, 1942 those from 21 to 65 were required to do so. If called, those from 44 to 65 were not to be used for the army, but to fill gaps in the skilled labor field. When the war ended on September 2, 1945, 107 of Belleville's boys had been killed in the service of their country.

On July 11, 1942, Rogers D. Jones, president of the Township High Board of Education, and Republican nominee for the board of review, entered the United States Navy as a lieutenant. He was elected president of Township High School Board in 1941 and re-elected in 1942, having served, at the time of his resignation, about one and one-half terms. He was considered the youngest president of a board in the state of Illinois since he was 31 at the time of his election.

In time of war, service organizations always attempt to make the life of the soldier as pleasant as possible. Early in World War II, so as not to have many small and conflicting groups, a United Service Organization was established by public subscription, although its building was erected by the War Department. Here games, reading rooms, telephones, radios, phonographs, arts and crafts, dancing, and pressing rooms were provided for the enlisted man.

Belleville asked for a \$93,000 two-story brick building, but instead, the government built a rambling one-story frame structure, which was furnished with leather chairs, couches, desks, and tables. Many townspeople contributed their radios, phonographs, books, and magazines. The service club was also supplied with a library, three billiard tables, and a lunch counter where

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sandwiches, soup, jelly, pie, cake, candy, and soft drinks are served. It is located at 710 East Main street.

Another service center was maintained by the Catholics at 500 East Main street, and one by the Lutherans at 409 East Main street.



## CHAPTER XI

# Our Contributions

### NATURAL RESOURCES

**I**llinois, a prairie state, ranks fourth in the United States in population, third in wealth, and twenty-third in area. It is a mineral giant with oil for blood and coal for its backbone. In 1941, it outranked 42 states in wealth of mineral production. Its total mineral production in 1940 was \$275,000,000, of which oil amounted to \$165,000,000 and coal to \$78,000,000. Others such as clay, shale, flourspar, silica, limestone, and Fuller's earth made up the balance. It ranks second in the production of coal, third in the production of oil, and contains more unmined coal than any other state. St. Clair County ranks fifth in coal production, being surpassed only by Franklin, Williamson, Sangamon, and Macoupin counties.

In the immediate community an unlimited amount of high grade Mississippi limestone is found just west and southwest of the city. Bricks have long been made from the clay which is found beneath the top soil in this area. Building sand is obtainable in unlimited quantities from the Mississippi River.

One of the less heroic, but no less important feats of LaSalle, the great French explorer of 1679, was his discovery of Belleville coal. He was the first white man to use it for fuel, one of the men of his party remarking how black his hands and face were from the coal he had carried on to the fire during a cold

night on their trip on the Mississippi River.

The out-cropping coal along the bluffs is so close to St. Louis that its commercial value soon became established. It was mined first in open trenches and then by tunneling into the bluff along the seams of coal. It was not yet suspected that this coal could also be found under the city. These miners sold their coal in St. Louis and to neighboring Illinois cities. The blacksmiths of Belleville were the first to use local coal in their shops and found it so much better that they never again used wood in their forges.

The first Belleville coal mine was opened by Willam Fowler in 1825 just south of the city in the bluffs where Richland Creek meets the highlands. It was then believed that coal could be found anywhere and all one had to do was to sink a shaft into it.

In 1940 there were a total of sixty mines operating within a few miles of the city, with a combined output of six million tons a year. Most of the coal is mined from the No. 6 seam and is commonly called Belleville Coal. This seam averages 6 feet, nine inches in thickness, and lies at a depth of 150 feet.

The area has an unlimited supply of bituminous coal, and all of it can readily be converted into coke with a tar yield of ten gallons a ton. It is the very soul and life of this community and is destined to keep this city one of the largest cities in Southern Illinois. It is estimated that no more than one-fiftieth of this coal has been tapped despite nearly a century of extensive mining operations.

In analyzing the No. 6 seam, the following contents were found: moisture 9:30, volatile material 37.2; fixed carbon, 40:65; ash, 12:85. The sulphur contents is 4.58 and B. T. U. rating is 12,300.

Belleville coal is being used less today than it was in the past. Two reasons for this seem to be the introduction of gas and oil from Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas, and St. Louis

Smoke Abatement Ordinance. More coal will again be used when this coal can be processed to meet the requirements of the St. Louis ordinance; when both cities become more reciprocally trade minded, and when some legislation is passed that would make gas and oil equal in cost in heat units to that of coal. Until that is done these mines will no doubt continue to close until only a few remain to furnish local needs. By 1950, the number of mines still operating had decreased to five.

## NEWSPAPERS

The St. Clair Gazette which made its appearance on December 25, 1838, was the first successful newspaper to be published in Belleville. Since then it has changed its name many times and is today the Belleville Daily Advocate, the oldest established newspaper in St. Clair County and the first in the state of Illinois to issue a daily edition. When it was first printed as a weekly in the building on the corner of Main and High streets it was considered the leading Democratic paper in Southern Illinois. In 1854, when the Free Soil Party was organized, it switched to an anti-slavery paper, and in 1856, became the leading Republican newspaper in this district.

Soon after its establishment, T. C. Clark retired from the printing business and from 1839 to 1841 James L. Boyd carried on the work alone. Then he sold out to Philip S. Fouke, and later the paper was taken over by Robert K. Fleming and his five sons. Edward, one of the sons, managed it until 1849 when he caught the gold fever and left for California leaving his brother, William in charge. Jehu Baker, considered to be the ablest editor and the leading statesman in the Middle West, joined the paper at this time as the editor. He later became congressman and United States minister to Venezuela.

The Advocate was next under the editorship of James W. Merritt and Judge Nathaniel Niles, who where succeeded by James S. Coulter. The latter changed its name to Daily Advo-

cate. In 1851 Nathaniel Niles became its editor, while the ex-goldseeker, Edward Fleming, returned because of his health.

In 1856, Edward Schiller joined Judge Niles, but remained with him only a year. In 1857, Collins Van Cleve and T. C. Weeden assumed the editorial chair for three years, until E. J. Montague became the new proprietor in 1860. In 1861, Alexander G. Dawes became the assistant editor, and the property went back to Van Cleve. Dawes remained but a year and a half when F. M. Hawes took over. In 1863, G. F. Kimball occupied that position, and he remained with the paper for nine years, until it was bought by J. H. Thomas. Kimball returned as its editor, succeeded later by John Woods.

The paper in 1898 changed its name to its present one, namely The Belleville Daily Advocate. It was then jointly owned by James A. Willoughby and John E. Thomas, who disposed of it on December 23, 1913 to Fred E. Evans, Preston K. Johnson, and Edward Julleis. Johnson and Julleis soon withdrew leaving Evans in charge until his death in 1930. It is today owned by the Belleville Advocate Printing Company headed by Cyril Arnold its president; Miss Anna L. Stolle, secretary-treasurer and general manager; Leslie Crow, news editor; Cyril Arnold, business manager; and Al. R. Schmidt, city editor. Its plant is located at South High and East Washington streets, where it moved in 1924. It is a thoroughly modern and up-to-date newspaper plant.

The first issue of the Belleville Daily News Democrat appeared on January 16, 1858, but prior to then, in 1857, its prospectus had been presented to the community.

Its founder, Rev. Boyakin, was born in Corinth, Mississippi, in 1807 and came to Belleville in 1840. During the Civil War he served as a chaplain, and was known as "the fighting parson." His father had saved Andrew Jackson's life during a skirmish with the Indians at Horse Shoe Bend, and out of gratitude for this heroic deed, General Jackson defrayed the expenses of

sending the son, William F. Boyakin, through college, where he prepared for the ministry.

He was an aggressive person and with the financial help of the wealthy J. S. D. (Don) Morrison, the *Weekly Democrat* was launched. Morrison donated the original press, which was of the Washington Hand type brought from Philadelphia.

In 1859, Boyakin, feeling the urge to "go West," sold the paper to E. R. Stuart and W. H. Shoupe. These two gentlemen held it until 1860 when it was acquired by G. A. Harvey, who conducted it with no small amount of success until August, 1863, when it was purchased by William Denlinger and Alexander B. Russell, both practical printers from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Besides being a printer, Russell was a good newspaperman and served as the editor, soon becoming quite a prominent figure in the community. The price of the weekly was at this time raised from \$1.50 per year to \$2.00. In 1863, the plant moved from its North High street address to the building then known as the Kaysing Building, where it occupied the third floor.

In the summer of 1880, Russell's health failed, and Judge William J. Underwood, then one of the leaders of the Democrats in the community, succeeded him as editor. It was his ambition to convert the *Weekly Democrat* into a daily paper, but failing in being able to do so, he resigned after serving as editor for slightly more than a year. Instead he organized the *Daily News* early in the spring of 1882. Articles of incorporation were filed in the offices of the secretary of state for the *Daily News Publishing Co.*, with William J. Underwood, Curt Heinfeldt, R. A. Halbert, F. F. Metschan, and Robert Rogers as incorporators. The capital stock was \$5,000. Judge Underwood was managing editor of the publication that commenced about the first of April.

That Belleville really needed an English daily was evident by the success of the new publication in the community. In



fact, it was not long before the Weekly Democrat began making overtures of wanting to come along. An amicable agreement was soon reached, and in 1883 the Daily News and The Weekly Democrat were consolidated under the name of the Belleville Daily News-Democrat, the caption which the paper has since borne. It was the only English daily in the city.

Having controlling stock, Judge Underwood not only became its president but contributed the editorials of the day. William G. Russell served as its business manager, while Ben Boneau was city editor. The paper now became definitely Democratic. Besides the daily paper, a weekly edition was also put out, and this enjoyed a large rural circulation. Judge Underwood, who was the first president of the Southern Illinois Press Association, had established quite a reputation as an editorial writer.

At the time of the merger the paper was published in the building directly back of the First National Bank on North Illinois street, then known as the Abend Building. Today that is the site of the Christmann Building. The business office, the editorial and the composing rooms occupied the second floor, while the job room was on the third. About twelve men were regularly employed by the company.

The paper continued under the management of Judge Underwood until December 15, 1891. When his health began to decline, he sold the paper to Fred J. Kern and F. W. Kraft of the East St. Louis Gazette. Mr. Kern had charge of the editorial and news departments, while Mr. Kraft became the business manager. This partnership continued until January 1895, when Mr. Kern purchased the interests of Mr. Kraft and became the sole owner of the paper.

In 1898 a disastrous fire inflicted much damage to the plant of the News-Democrat. The damages ran to approximately \$18,000. Valuable files of the old copies were also destroyed. Moving from the Abend Building, the paper was then located



in the northwest corner of the Public Square. Mr. Kern then bought the corner property at South Illinois and East Lincoln streets, where the modern plant is located. Today Robert L. and Richard P. Kern, his sons, are its publishers.

In the past, Belleville supported more newspapers than it does today. In the decade beginning with 1880, it had, besides its two dailies, four weeklies and one Sunday paper. The *Zeitung Und Stern*, a German publication, issued both a daily and a weekly paper. This was the leading German paper in the state, outside of Chicago, and it was supposed to have had the largest circulation. It was published by the firm of Semmelroth, Heinfeld, and Metschan. The *Belleville Post* was established as the organ of the German Republicans in 1884. Later the *Zeitung* and the *Post* merged under the name of the *Post and Zeitung*, and for years it was an outstanding German daily. Sometime later, the *Morning Record*, a new daily morning paper made its appearance. It was Belleville's only morning paper.

The *Intelligencer Blatt* was a monthly paper published by William Homeier as an advertising medium for his real estate business and to gratify his taste for the literary.

The *Belleville Tageblatt Und Arbeiter Zeitung*, published by Hanz Schwarz, Sr., was a German weekly relished by many for its spicy articles often directed at some public official.

There was also the *Treu Bund*, and a Sunday paper published and edited by Fred W. Kraft.

## CITY OFFICIALS

When Belleville's first city council was elected in 1850, it was agreed that its meetings would be held on the first Monday of each month in the city hall, which then stood east of the Market House, on the present site of a parking lot and filling station.

Some early city officers met certain specified needs, but

today their offices no longer exist. There was a time when a coal oil inspector was very essential because all illumination was done with kerosene. Its use constituted a fire hazard, and to reduce this it could not be sold in the city unless it had been passed upon by such an inspector who used the ignition test. Only oil that ignited or exploded at a temperature of less than 150 degrees was considered unsafe. He also made sure that the traditional coal oil can, with a potato stuck in the spout as a cork, would not blow up easily.

The salaries of the city officials were much lower than they are today. The city was naturally smaller, and prices in general were much lower. The mayor's salary in 1844 was fixed at \$200 a year, and the aldermen each received \$35 for their services. The city clerk's salary was set at \$150, and the city treasurer received \$75 a year. The city marshall was granted \$100 a year, plus a cut of all the fines and fees. The all important master of the city market received a salary of \$50 a year.

We may laugh at some of the city offices of the early days, but they, too, would find much reason to laugh at some of our ways in these modern days. For instance, a dog catcher was added to the city's payroll as late as May 21, 1913. In that year too, a city ordinance was passed making it unlawful for any fowls to run at large within the city limits.

In Belleville's one-hundred years of existence it has had 41 mayors. One of them, Louis Barthel, died in office, in 1889. Fred J. Kern held office longer than any other, serving five terms, from 1903 to 1913. Peter Wilding was elected five times in 1859, 1860, 1871, 1875, and 1879, resigning in 1860.

Herman G. Weber also was elected five times, in 1873, 1874, 1883, 1885, and 1891. He resigned in 1885 and in 1891. Upon receiving the appointment as United States marshal in 1885, he handed in his resignation as mayor on July 6, contributing his two months salary to help defray the expenses of a special election which was held on July 28, 1885. In this election

Michael Reis was elected mayor, as he was again in the election of 1887. Following is a list of mayors and the years they were elected:

1850	Theo. J. Kraft	1883	Herman G. Weber
1851	Ed. Abend	1885	Michael Reis
1852	John W. Pulliam	1889	Louis Barthel
1853	Joseph B. Underwood	1889	William White
1854	William C. Davis	1890	Jefferson Rainey
1855	J. W. Hughes	1891	Herman G. Weber
1857	Edward Abend	1893	John Carson
1859	Peter Wilding	1893	Fred C. Knoebel
1860	F. H. Pieper	1895	Frederick Sunkel
1861	Henry Goedeking	1897	Edward F. Winkler
1863	Charles Palme	1899	Henry T. Fredericks
1864	Herman Burkhardt	1901	John B. Hay
1865	Edward Abend	1903	Fred J. Kern
1866	Joseph Kirkpatrick	1913	R. E. Duvall
1867	Frederick Ropiquet	1919	P. K. Johnson
1869	Henry Abend	1921	Joseph J. Anton
1871	Peter Wilding	1929	Charles Stegmeyer
1873	Herman G. Weber	1931	George A. Brechnitz
1875	Peter Wilding	1935	George Remnsnider
1877	Henry Kircher	1941	Roland W. Jung
1879	Peter Wilding	1945	Ernst W. Tiemann, Sr.,
1881	B. J. West, Jr.,	1949	Harold V. Calhoun

The city officials in 1951 were as follows:

Harold V. Calhoun, mayor; Carl Siegel, city clerk; John Courar, city treasurer; Casper Arndt and Philip Huling, custodians city hall; Mrs. Jack Gundlach, secretary to mayor.

Members of the city council are as follows:

George Glakemeier, Calvin Isselhardt, Carl Lenz, John (Red) McDonald, Charles Nichols, Ben Sauer, John Schloemann, Edward Schmittling, Henry Schwarz, Irvin Stein, Ava Teel, Ernest Tiemann, Roy Torloting, and George Uhl.

## NOTED VISITORS

St. Clair County, throughout its history, has at various times entertained distinguished guests. It was in April, 1769, that Pontiac, famous Indian chief, visited Cahokia and was murdered on the streets of that village.

During his American tour in 1824, Lafayette, at the invitation of Governor Coles, spent one busy day in Kaskaskia, where he was the guest of honor at a reception in the home of Colonel Edgar and at a banquet at Colonel Sweet's tavern. In the evening, he attended a gay ball in the imposing residence of William Morrison, departing at midnight, by steam boat, for Nashville, Tennessee.

In October, 1876, Robert G. Ingersoll, a guest of the local Republican Club, addressed the largest Belleville audience that had ever been assembled up to that time, in the City Park Theatre.

William Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, was in the city on several occasions. At various times Belleville audiences have listened attentively to the campaign speeches of such renowned Americans as Abraham Lincoln, Richard M. Johnson, William Jennings Bryan, William H. Taft, Thomas R. Marshall, General Leonard W. Wood, Wendell Willkie, and Henry A. Wallace, all who expounded the issues of the day.

The presidential election of 1840 was memorable for having been the most extravagant of all previous campaigns. At that time the Whigs were well organized. The backwoods life of their candidate, William H. Harrison and his victory in the battle of Tippecanoe were typified in parades that stressed log cabins, canoes, hard cider, coon-skin caps, brass bands, and fifes and drums. Such a demonstration was staged in Belleville on April 11, 1840. After the parade a political meeting, attended by about three hundred people, was held at which most of the speakers were from St. Louis. The first of them denounced as traitors all who would not support their candidate. The second

speaker to mount the rostrum was Abraham Lincoln. The Belleville Advocate commenting on the meeting, while giving two columns to it, was not very complimentary. Its introductory remarks were as follows:

"As we anticipated, a more perfect farce has rarely been exhibited in this or any county, than the Whig celebration on Saturday last . . .

"We expected from the array of orators, that the people would have been informed something of the principles, of the measures that were to be carried out by General Harrison if elected; in this all were, like ourselves, disappointed . . .

"Mr. Lincoln followed next, a federal candidate for elector. His speech was weak, and feeble. 'How different,' remarked many of the Whigs, 'to what we expected.' Poor Lincoln! he should have rested his fame upon his printed speech, going the rounds in the federal papers, as purported to have been delivered by him at Springfield. He predicated his whole speech upon the sale of a one-eyed horse for twenty-seven dollars, that happened to be sold by a constable during the day. To what slight accidents are we frequently indebted for our great things! How very fortunate for the Whigs, that Mr. Lincoln saw the sale of the one-eyed horse that day! He was then enabled to prove that Mr. Van Buren caused it, together with all the other ills of life that us poor mortals 'are heir to'."

Late in the summer of 1839, Belleville was honored by a visit from the vice-president of the United States, the Honorable Richard M. Johnson, whom tradition credits with having shot Tecumseh, and was the only vice-president to be elected by the United States senate. He was making a tour of the states, feeling out the Democratic convention in 1840. He was a guest at the Neuhoﬀ House, then a newly erected, large hotel. Here he held a meeting in the morning, which was attended by men in great numbers, regardless of party affiliation. In the evening a brilliant ball was held, which was attended by the elite of



the town and the surrounding country.

Although Belleville has never been entirely flattered by its mention in the "American Notes" by Charles Dickens, it does feel a bit of pride in having had him as a guest as he and his party passed through here in April, 1842 on their way to the Looking Glass Prairie, near Lebanon. His stay here lasted but an hour or two while he took dinner. Court was in session at the time of his arrival, and "the path, nearly knee deep in mud and slime, which led to the forest," that he sarcastically refers to, was the Public Square. Of course there was no paving and there may have been some mud and trees, and the buildings surrounding the Square were early pioneer buildings of the time. Instead of the present court house, the old, square, brick one stood a little northeast of it, to which members of the bar hitched their horses, but they were not temporary "hitching racks" as Dickens described them.

"The old, shambling low-roofed outhouse, half cowshed and half kitchen" in which he says he was entertained, was the Mansion House, the best and largest brick house in the town, with the exception of the court house and the mill. It was anything but what he described it, actually being roomy and well furnished, and having been recently erected at great cost by the Reverend Thomas Harrison, whose daughter and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. J. McBride, were its proprietors.

The local paper, reviewing his visit, refuted his story that Belleville was a "land of mud and brush," of "frogs and pigs." It even inferred he was "decidedly drunk" when he stated that the sun set on the opposite side of Looking Glass Prairie which, according to his story, would have been in the northeast.

Abraham Lincoln paid his second visit to Belleville in the campaign of 1856, when he came at the invitation of William Bissell, who was then running for the governorship of the state. He was a guest in the home of John Scheel on South Illinois



street, where the Junior High School now stands. He met all of the leading local Republicans and in the evening spoke from a platform erected on the eastern end of the Market Square, on the site of a filling station today.

There was no heckling or disappointment by the audience at this rally, for Lincoln displayed the greatest ability, and it was admitted that his was the speech of the day. He captivated the Germans with his "God bless the Dutch," as he lauded them for their definite stand against slavery, saying that they were more enthusiastic for the cause of freedom than any of the other nationalities.

Although none of the Lincoln-Douglas debates were held in Belleville, Douglas was a guest here in 1858. He made a pompous entry accompanied by his beautiful wife, who had been the belle of Washington society. The town was crowded for the oration, for more than five hundred people came from St. Louis to see and to hear him, but the local people, on the whole, showed little enthusiasm.

In the late '60's Mark Twain visited Belleville. He was writing a history of J. A. Slade, the Robin Hood of the Rocky Mountains, whose brother, James P. Slade, was a teacher in the Belleville schools and was able to supply the information sought by Mark Twain.

On March 13, 1900, Eugene V. Debs, the Socialist nominee for president, delivered a speech here on liberty.

## NOTED PLACES AND EVENTS

The Dr. A. W. Wagner residence at 313 South High street has been at one time or another the home of Lyman Trumbull, Uniter States senator from Illinois, and Theodore Krafft, first mayor of Belleville.

The site of Hotel Belleville marks the location of one of Belleville's first log houses which was constructed by a Mr. Kerr in 1855. Later a Mr. Knoebel erected a fine brick hotel

there, which in 1844 was razed to make way for the original Belleville House, which remained in use until 1930 when the present hotel was built.

The Thomas House stood at the northwest corner of High and Main streets where it was built in 1854, when Belleville had a population of eight thousand, at a cost of \$20,000. Its proprietor specialized in vacation trade. It was a rather pretentious building, having rooms that were larger than those usually found in hotels, thereby affording better accommodations for those who spent their summer away from St. Louis.

Other early rooming and boarding places were the California House, located on the west side of Charles street and South Lincoln; the City Hotel on the southwest corner of West Main and South Third streets; the Farmer's Home on the north side of Main between Church and Charles streets; the Franklin House on the south side of Main near Charles street; the Illinois House on the south side of Main between High and Jackson streets; and the Prudo Hotel located on the southeast corner of Illinois and Washington streets. Besides these there was the Railroad House; the Hinckley House, which is now the present Lincoln Hotel; the Green Tree Hotel; the Hanover House and the Napoleon House. Although classified as hotels, none of these, with the exception of the Belleville House, the Thomas House, and the Hinckley House, were actually that, but rather rooming and boarding houses. With few exceptions they had their wagon-yards where farmers would tie up their horses and teams while in town. Hotel Belleville today is Belleville's leading hotel, with a total of 125 rooms. The Lincoln Hotel has 28.

It is undeniably true that no city in Illinois has a more bewildering combination of the old and the new in architecture than ours. Up-to-date bungalows and dwellings over a hundred years old can be found side by side. The use of brick in the construction of the early homes was due to the fact that

the city abounded in brick manufacturing plants, instead of saw mills, making it, not only the best, but the cheapest construction material available.

On January 17, 1844, a movement was started to buy some land for a county home for the poor. Forty acres northwest of Belleville were bought from Henry L. Million for \$450. The first building erected here was constructed by George Eckert and Simon Eimer at a cost of \$850, and was opened as a poor house on December 5, 1844. John Wright and his wife, its first superintendent and matron, received a salary of \$150 a year.

The City Park and Theater, after its construction in 1859, was for many years one of the city's leading places of amusement. It was located at the northwest corner of West A and North Second streets, and at one time was the site of the Heberer Brewery. The City Park Garden, patterned after the European beer gardens, was for many years the gathering place of Belleville's old German families. It was a place of dignity and refinement, and had much of the flavor of "Old Vienna," expressing so typically all that is meant in that German word "Gemuetlichkeit." The theater was the scene of many gay balls where the youth of that day whirled in the waltzes and polkas—the selfsame folks who, today, are the grandparents of our modern jitterbugs.

In 1884 the theater was remodeled, having then a seating capacity of one thousand. Later it became known as the Opera House. Shortly after 1900 it was destroyed by fire and had to be abandoned. Later it was replaced by a light wooden structure and called the Garden Theater. Anheuser-Busch Company of St. Louis had bought it in 1895, and at that time it catered to stock companies. After a few successful seasons this too, finally failed and the place became the Budweiser Garden and was used only as a public dancing place.

On the east half of this block stood the magnificent home

of the distinguished citizen and statesman, Adam W. Snyder. It was built in the 1830's and remained the homestead of three generations of his descendants, when it was purchased by Dr. Edward M. Irwin, who later became Republican congressman from this district. He, in turn, sold it to the federal government, which erected in its stead the present Post Office Building.

In 1910 George P. Stolberg established Belleville's first summer resort. He had bought the deep valley just west of his home, built a dam across the lower part of it and had, as a result, a fifteen acre lake that was as much as 6 feet deep in many places.

In June 1902, Christian L. Ebsen, who was at that time the physical culture instructor for the Turner Society, purchased the lake known as Knispel's Lake in the Star Brewery Park. It was one of the most popular resorts for swimming and outings for many years. Later he disposed of it to the Turner Society, which made extensive improvements in making the pool a modern one and in improving the grounds for picnic purposes. In February, 1944, it was sold to Mr. E. J. Somers of the Somers Manufacturing Company.

Westhaven Swimming Pool was built by Arthur Buesch. It is located on South Illinois street, just outside of Belleville and next to Westhaven golf course.

St. Clair County's first county fair was inaugurated on October 18 and 19, 1854, and from then on it was held yearly until the early part of the 1920's. A modern version of it was revived in 1939, and it has been an annual event since. It was originally organized by the farmers and merchants, who called themselves the St. Clair County Agricultural Society. The first fair was held on the Mascoutah Plank road, south of the stone bridge three-fourths mile south of the Court House. Later a tract of land was bought south of Belleville in the Richland Creek Bottom, east of the present South Illinois street. This

was given the name of the Belleville Fairgrounds. It was splendidly equipped with all the necessary exhibit buildings, an amphitheatre and a fine race track. Well-kept flower beds were laid out. This attractive spot was also the early place for the annual school picnic, an event which was unsurpassed by any other in Belleville.

Fair days to the early citizens were gala ones. For many weeks farmers and their wives prepared and planned on entries that would certainly bring them glory. The Fair was among the best in the state and ten to twenty thousand people attended every year. It was a meeting place for friends and relatives who rarely saw each other more than once a year.

The Fair proved so successful that it became necessary to run it an entire week. Thursday was the big day, and as many as seven thousand tickets were sold. People came as far as forty miles by train and horse-drawn vehicles. When the roads were "good" the dust was six inches deep, and when it rained the mud was twice as deep. One of the outstanding events held on Thursday was "The Ladies Driving and Riding Contest." In those days women would not ride astride as they do now, but used a sidesaddle with but one stirrup. Their riding habit consisted of short jacket, a long draped skirt, and a light hat, giving them a picturesque appearance.

An annual event of recent years is the Homecoming, sponsored each fall by the Junior Chamber of Commerce. At times it has been held at the Athletic Field, located at South Illinois street and Cleveland avenue. For the last few years it was held on the parking lot between North Illinois and High streets. One of the most successful of these was supervised by Waldo Tisch, who was the general manager of the committee in 1940.

In pioneer days people took their politics seriously, and Belleville was no exception, for its citizens entered into all of the campaigns with great enthusiasm. Many spectacular parades were held. Streets were decorated with flags, and business places



were illuminated, adding color to the occasion. The Republicans and Democrats vied with one another in their ambition to put on the biggest show.

One such noted event was the huge demonstration staged by the Republican party on Saturday evening, October 18, 1856. The number taking part in that torch light parade including those at the speakers stand, was estimated at six thousand. Lebanon was represented with three hundred, Mascoutah with three hundred, among other cities that sent their delegations, each carrying a banner emblazoned with different slogans. One of them read, "We earn the bread we eat, and we eat the bread we earn." There were eight hundred torches carried in the parade, thirty ornamental lanterns on poles; several bands furnished the music and many banners were waved. Seated on the platform with Abraham Lincoln were Lyman Trumbull, William H. Bissell, candidate for governor, and Gustave Koerner, speakers on the occasion.

On May 23, 1879 a Women's Christian Temperance Union was organized here by Francis Willard, its national leader. Twenty members attended the first meeting, and all signed the charter. It was disbanded in 1881, reorganized on March 16, 1882, and still retains a small membership here.

Whereas fatal accidents today receive only passing interest, such was not the case in that of Belleville's first traffic tragedy on June 5, 1911. It occurred when Carl Forst was instantly killed and S. F. McKenney, a sixty-year-old contractor, was seriously injured. McKenney's car was travelling west on Main street near the Belt Railroad when the machine was struck by a fast westbound suburban street car.

On March 10, 1914, the hundredth anniversary of the selection of Belleville as the county seat was duly celebrated. The program began at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon with an invocation by the Right Rev. Henry Althoff, after which Governor Edward F. Dunne delivered an address, calling attention



to the great men who had lived in this county. Following this, a celebration was held at the Elks Club, at which a bronze tablet which had been placed in the northeast corner of the building marking the spot where the first building in Belleville had been erected, was unveiled.

Belleville's population growth has been a uniform one. According to United States census statistics it has been as follows: 1850, 2,941; 1860, 7,239; 1870, 8,146; 1880, 10,683; 1890, 13,361; 1900, 17,484; 1910, 21,132; 1920, 24,835; 1930, 28,425; 1940, 28,405; and 1950, 32,700.

Of its present population, 93½ per cent of its people are of native white birth, 6 percent are foreign born and one-half of one per cent are negro. It has 7,630 families, living in 6,833 dwellings, of which 4,576 or 67 per cent are privately owned. Its population is a cross section of many nationalities, but those of German descent greatly outnumber all others.

Democratic institutions, besides giving us political and religious freedom afford every man an equal chance to get along in the world. They have welded us together in an incredibly short time, while still allowing the individual his national differences in nonessentials. Nothing impresses the foreigner visiting our country more than do our fine schools and universities and the rapidity with which immigrants emerge from the melting pot as real Americans.

Belleville now represents the result of 145 years of growth. It has never been a boom town, but has reached its population and size through a steady, unaltered advance, which has given it stability.

As far as numerical strength of family names is concerned, the Mueller family leads them all. The 1941 edition of Polk's City Directory lists 102 persons by that name. Those next in order were: 100 Millers; 97 Schmidts; 65 Smiths; 59 Johnsons; 37 Browns; 33 Joneses; and 32 Brauns.

Belleville's altitude is from 420 to 630 feet above sea level,

while that of East St. Louis is but 415 feet. The average temperature is 56.3 degrees fahrenheit. The seasonal range is 48.4 degrees, from a January mean of 31.9 to a July mean of 89.3 degrees. Thus five months are cool, three are warm and four are hot.

The growing season extends from April 4 to October 27, amounting to about 190 days. The mean annual rainfall is 39.7 inches, while the average humidity is 70. The mean annual sunshine is 62 per cent, although four months have more than 70 per cent. Prevailing winds are from the south. This is an average, established by the measurements taken by the government over a period of 85 years, from 1837-1922.

## CHAPTER XII

# Looking Ahead

### WHAT MAKES A GOOD CITY

A community is a group of people living together in a given locality, and bound together by common interests and common law. A community as a whole will make an effort to be a model one, so that it will be attractive to others, and its citizens will desire to live in no other place.

Every community has features which prove to be an asset or a liability. If it is located on a river, it has a natural means of transportation, and thriving trade is likely to develop. Lacking that, it behooves it to provide some other means of transportation, such as highways, and railroads, to and from some large commercial center. This always pays great dividends.

The first step toward making a good city is to study the causes which have made the best cities as good as they are. Every city has its individual peculiarities. No two are identical. The more familiar one is with different cities, the greater a variation is revealed. Clothes, care, entertainment, and interests may seem similar, but a deeper study of them reveals that these similarities are only skin deep. Some cities are very negligent in their provisions for health, comfort, education, recreation, and other features of good living and well-being. This is partly due to lack of resources, and partly to the inactivity of its citizens to realize what a city can and should be. Its inhabitants fail to compare their city with more progressive ones and

are unaware of what others have accomplished.

On the other hand, there are cities which have nearly attained economic perfection, though many of their residents are ignorant of their good fortune.

One of the first lessons that citizens should learn is that it is not only the prevention and the cure of disease, but the preservation of health that is the goal of modern health agencies. To preserve health they must learn to cooperate with all the agencies teaching modern hygiene and sanitation.

Some facts relative to the average American city are summed up as follows: 60 per cent of all 16 and 17 year old boys and girls are in school; 23 per cent of the homes use gas; 24 per cent use electricity; 12 per cent have telephones and radios, and the infant death rate for one year is below 63 per thousand.

Cities differ greatly in qualities which are vitally important for human living. The chances that a baby will die within a year after its birth are greater in some cities than in others. This is partly due to ignorant and careless parents. It is also due to standards of living which are high or low according to the community's management of its health and sanitation problems. In some cities the infant death rate is five times as great as in others. In some the deaths, per thousand population from typhoid, are over twenty times as great as in others.

Standards for health are measured by the general death rate. The better cities are those in which the people have a better chance of living. In 1929, the total national bill for medical care amounted to \$3,656,000,000 or about four per cent of the national income, a per capita expense of \$30 for every man, woman, and child in the country. The government contends that there should be 142 doctors per 100,000 population, which should give us forty-five. There should be 179 dentists to every 100,000 population, which according to Belleville's population would amount to fifty-five.

Educational standards are measured by the per capita public

expenditure for public schools as a whole, for teachers and their salaries, for text book supplies, for libraries. It is measured also by the percentage of people 16 to twenty years old attending school. A city ranks high educationally when its citizens are given more dollars' worth of educational opportunity and when its youth can remain in school longer. To rank high in recreation a city must consider two things: one, the per capita public expense for recreation; and two, the per capita cost of acreage. Where human problems, the housing program, wages and working conditions, educational and health facilities, are constantly watched and corrected to meet new and progressive social and economic conditions, a better city will be the result. Human needs are the first requisite of any well governed city.

Some cities, hoping to improve themselves, have gone into various forms of business enterprises, operating transit systems, electric utilities, gas plants, and even housing projects. In 1938, four-fifths of all cities of more than five thousand population owned some form of public utility. Seventy-two per cent owned their own water works; 15.8 per cent owned their own light plants; 40.7 per cent had sewage disposal plants and 22.5 per cent owned and operated a city airport.

Contributing factors towards community welfare are reflected in the lowered rates of mortality from social diseases, homicide, and automobile accidents. It is reflected also in the value of a city's property, its schools, libraries, parks and recreational facilities. It is good to live where there are only a minimum of violent deaths, where, through wisdom and honesty of good administration, liberal provisions have been made for educational, recreational, and health programs, without burdening taxpayers with a heavy debt.

As a rule, suburban residential cities are considered preferable, for here homes are located away from the noise and grime of traffic, factories, or railroads. They usually have comfortable homes, large enough to provide comfort for every member of

the family, and they are equipped with modern plumbing, electric lights, gas or electric stoves, central heating systems and all the other conveniences of labor-saving devices. When, in congested districts, homes lack the bare essentials for decent living, tenements and slums result. Here ten to fifteen people live in two or three small, unsanitary, dark, dingy rooms. In some cities one-fifth, or more, of the total population lives in miserable hovels totally unfit for human habitation.

The question then arises, "Why do so many Americans live in poor houses?" The answer is that their income is too low. A city's general welfare depends just as much on wealth and income, as it does on personal, moral, and mental qualities.

In determining the mental or moral qualities, the following must be considered: number of persons per thousand graduating from public high schools per year, the per cent of taxes devoted for maintenance of public libraries, the per cent of literacy in the total population, the per cent of literacy among those between ages of 15 to 24, the per capita circulation of public library books, the per capita number of homes owned, the per capita number of telephones, the number of dentists divided by the number of lawyers, the excess of the number of physicians, trained nurses, and teachers over the number of male domestic servants, a low per capita number of deaths from social diseases, and a low per capita number of deaths from homicides.

Measured by this standard, cities differ vastly. It is indeed a high-ranking community whose citizens live decently, who demand the best in education, who read good books, who spend their personal money to buy a home, who are more concerned about their children's teeth than they are in engaging in a law suit. They insist that public money be wisely spent for teachers, schools, libraries and parks, and they abhor meddling politicians, jails, and lack of law enforcement.

Some of the present trends which are impairing residential areas in cities and which constitute so important a part of the



economic structure are: the withdrawal of the population to suburban areas, the emergence of large blight districts, the depreciation of property values, the impairment of tax structures, and the increased cost for police, fire, and welfare services in the worst run-down areas.

There is also such a vast difference in living costs in various localities. This, too, is important to the breadwinner, who quite naturally chooses to live where his money buys most. In cities where both wages and salaries are below the average, people fool themselves into believing that their cost of living is lower, when in reality this is not the case. The real fact is that their scale of living is low, and that the citizens live in less comfortable homes. They eat cheaper qualities of food, wear cheaper clothes, enjoy cheaper entertainment, and have inferior schools. It is not and cannot be, the same life at a lower cost. One gets what one pays for.

It is essential that a city maintain a good reputation. Too often it is belittled by would-be writers, who think it is smart to write derogatory articles, exaggerating its weaker points instead of extolling its many good ones. Too many people know Pittsburgh, only as the place where "hunkies" make steel, Joliet, Illinois, too often is associated only with convicts. Chicago always conjures up gangsters, while Belleville is too often spoken of deridingly as a little German village. Let us remember that the good name of a city is as priceless as is the reputation of an individual. It is up to the citizens themselves to maintain the good name of their city by constantly boosting it. Everybody likes the man who is proud of his community and the one whose community is proud of him.

To attract outsiders, many cities have adopted city planning. Often financial difficulties of municipalities may be traced to their failure to adopt effective measures for the present and future. City planning holds city expenditures and the direction of its development and growth within the bounds of econo-

mical and wise administration. Effective city planning depends upon an understanding of what planning can and should do to protect the standards of living. Effective planning will also stabilize property values. To arouse an interest and to maintain it, the slogan, "It pays to plan," should be adopted universally. No growing community can afford to be without a planning program lest it encourage waste and disorder. A planning program charts the way to order, convenience, safety, comfort, and beauty.

In 1922 there were only 185 cities and towns that practiced city planning. Today there are more than 1700 and there would be many more, were it not for the lack of understanding on the part of the citizens. Present day city planners relegate residential areas to quiet, clean neighborhoods. They lay out a city—its streets, parks, recreation centers, businesses, industrial and residential sections—with the idea of providing the utmost in health, beauty, and convenience for the entire community.

## HOW TO IMPROVE THIS CITY

Recognizing the factors that contribute toward making a city good or bad, we have yet to mention that which makes a city better. Today both industry and business use scientific measurements as an index to their financial condition and well being. No longer do they merely take a casual look to see how things are progressing. Instead they have explicit measurements which indicate clearly and concisely what each department is accomplishing. Cities can do the same. It is important to know what is being done for health, education, character, comfort, security and entertainment.

When a tornado sweeps through a community one immediately reads about it in the newspapers where it is given much publicity. On the contrary, when an epidemic breaks out, newspapers scarcely mention it, or if they do, it is put on an obscure page. When new homes are built one sees them, but if the

circulation of the public library, or the number of property owners increases, few citizens are aware of it. The following ten-item yardstick, which anybody can apply, will tell fairly accurately how a city measures up in general welfare. \*

Item 1. Get from the health officer the number of deaths per year of infants, ranging from 1 to 365 days, per 1,000 live births. Subtract this number from 120 and multiply the result by 2. Cities vary from 20 to 164 points.

Item 2. Get from the city treasurer the year's expenditures for the operation and maintenance of the department of recreation. Divide this amount by the estimated population of the city and take ten times the quotient expressed in dollars. Cities vary from 5 to 40 points.

Item 3. Get from the city treasurer the estimated value of all the city's property in the form of schools, libraries, museums, parks and other recreational facilities. Divide the amount by the estimated population of the city, then multiply the result expressed in dollars by 1.25. Cities vary from 72 to 161 points.

Item 4. Get from the city treasurer the total value of all public property used for municipal and public services (exclusive of streets and sewers.) Get also the net public debt. Subtract the latter from the former, then divide by the population. Enter a credit of one for every \$3 per capita excess of property over debt. In case the city owes more than its public property is worth, enter the appropriate negative number. Cities vary from 10 to 46 points.

Item 5. Get from the city treasurer or from the superintendent of schools, the expenditures for the operation and maintenance of schools. Do not include capital outlays or payment of interest of school debts. Divide the amount by the population. Multiply number of dollars in the quotient by two, that is,

\**Your City* by E. L. Thorndike, 1940, Harcourt Brace and Co.

enter a credit of one for every 50 cents per capita spent. Cities vary from 23 to 56 points.

Item 6. Get from the person in charge of the public library the circulation of books as he would report it to the American Library Association. Divide this number by the city's population. Multiply the result by 5. Cities vary from 11 to 84 points.

Item 7. Get from the superintendent of schools the number of persons who graduated from senior high school during the year, and divide this number by the city's population. Multiply the quotient by 14141. Cities vary from 69 to 191 points.

Item 8. Get from the superintendent of schools the number of pupils in school who were aged 16 years and no months, to 17 years and 11 months, living in the city at that date and give a credit of one for each per cent. Cities vary from 52 to 92 points.

Item 9. Get from the superintendent of the telephone company the number of subscribers. Multiply the number of phones by 333 and divide the product by the city's population, that is, give a credit of one for every three phones per thousand population. Cities vary from 25 to 90 points.

Item 10. Get from the power company the number of homes that are supplied with electricity. Multiply by 200 and divide by the city's population. That is, give credit of two for each domestic installation of electricity per 100 population. Cities vary from 30 to 64 points.

Add the results of the 10 entries. The total should be between 300 to 1000. The average city totals 575.

To improve a city therefore one must begin with the home, with the neighborhood, and with the individual family. Trees should be planted along vacant lots which should be cleaned. Support the neighborhood grocer or he will leave. One must live within one's income, at the same time providing well for one's family. Nothing justifies a loafer, dead-beat, or family deserter. To raise a city's status we must avoid the things that

tend to lower the standard of living. To raise the standard it behooves us to remove our slums because they are wasteful and dangerous, and it is cruel to tolerate them.

Suburbs should co-operate with big cities in providing recreational facilities, even though they have private yards, gardens and country clubs. Better still, they should merge with neighboring communities because their territory is contiguous, thereby sharing in the public benefits, which now they are denied, such as sewer and garbage disposal systems, public parks, and reduced insurance rates with added fire protection.

A good citizen is as loyal to his city as he is to his family, his church, and his clubs. Even the poorest city protects his person, his property, and educates his children. Few citizens give as much as they receive. Too many take the streets, sewer, water, light, schools, and parks for granted, like so much sunshine and rain. We belong to our city, and it, in turn, belongs to us. A city needs to see itself as it really is, so as to see itself better in the future. Its citizens need to sell it to others and to do so they must believe it is a good one. Always point out its good features instead of emphasizing its shortcomings, remembering always that to sell a community to others, its dwellers must be sold on it themselves.

Schools may profitably consider extending the distribution of educations so that it will reach all those who crave and deserve it. Churches may profitably consider the further development of activities in which they are already engaged. They can increase their support of welfare work, they should maintain a well-balanced budget to provide for the upkeep of the church buildings, the minister, good music, overhead expenses, and charity; there should be a consolidation of churches; the increased promotion of spiritual life should be their prime concern. If a church fulfills this duty it cannot help but improve the community.

Political parties should agree to support and keep out of



politics the impartial recommendations of experts in public health, education, recreation, prevention of crime, prevention of poverty, and general welfare.

Business men and manufactures can do much to improve a city. If they pay low wages, it will handicap the schools, churches and clubs. Businessmen should be honest and should protect their customers from paying for lies, flattery, false hopes, and deceptive advertising.

In order that a city may remain in a high level, citizens must constantly keep before them the following: 1. How many babies born in the community die during their first year? 2. How many of the boys and girls at 16 or 17 years attend school? 3. How many of its people own their own homes? 4. How fully are the homes provided with electricity? 5. How many have telephone services? 6. How general is illiteracy? 7. How much crime is there? 8. How many of the homes are worth less than \$1500, or rent for less than \$15 per month? 9. How much is spent for teachers' salaries (per capita)? 10. How well are the residents protected against communicable diseases? Every good citizen must always resolve to do everything within his power to improve his community in each of the above mentioned. He must also help in seeing to its cleanliness, beauty, health, order, leisure, and security.

It is our solemn duty to transmit the city to the coming generations more beautiful than it was transmitted to us. Let us remember that all the good the past has had, remains to make our own time glad. When we build, therefore, let us think we are building forever; let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendents will be grateful for. Let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come, when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and the wrought substance of them, "This our fathers did for us."





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